

No. 27

World RAINFOREST Report

FEBRUARY 1994

The Huaorás of Ecuador.

A first-hand report on
demarcation of their territory.

The FROGS of the World are CROAKING

- their worldwide
disappearance • •
has disturbing
global implications



WOODCHIPPING AUSTRALIA'S FORESTS

Another Sellout by the Federal Government?

PLUS! News from Canada, Brazil, Japan, Borneo...

W

Editorial

Several people have said to me something like: "All the factual info in World Rainforest Report is important, but what about more Deep Ecology stuff?" - or, "how about more from indigenous peoples". One reader suggested a need for "intensification of the more unconscious link between us all". They are right. There is a clear need for articles that nurture us in a way that matter-of-fact descriptions of rainforest destruction never will. WRR has run such articles from time to time. In future you can expect them to be more common.

* * *

In this issue, we give a lot of attention to reviewing books. Even if you don't intend reading the books concerned, the reviews should still be of interest. Each book dealt with is concerned in some way with the causes and solutions to the problem of rainforest destruction, and so the reviews are discussions on why rainforest is being destroyed and what can be done about it.

* * *

It is important to get the message about rainforest destruction and what can be done about it to as many people as possible. Please show your copy of WRR to friends and suggest they subscribe. Ask your local library to subscribe. Or your school, college or university library.

LETTER WRITING CHECKLIST

For a list of all the "What You Can Do" letter writing requests in this edition of WRR, turn to page 34.

Send us copies of your letters and we will print our choice of the best reader's response to a "What You Can Do" request.

WORLD RAINFOREST REPORT welcomes unsolicited articles. The deadline to submit articles for the next edition is March 25th.

Published by the Rainforest Information Centre, PO Box 368, Lismore, NSW 2480, Australia. Ph. +066 218505 Fax: 066 222 339 Email: peg:rainfaus
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 Cover Design & Drawing: Brian Slapp
 Looking After Tane: Brenda Crosby

**PRINTED ON 100%
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THE FROGS ARE CROAKING: WHO'S NEXT?

The Mystery of Global Amphibian Declines

Amphibians all over the world began disappearing in the 1970's. Scientists from every continent have documented a rapid, global decline. They survived the dinosaurs and are considered to be the planet's premier indicator species. Why are they disappearing now?

by Kieran Suckling*

With the exception of fish, amphibians are the Earth's most ancient vertebrates. They emerged from the ocean some 350 million years ago, eventually evolving into reptiles, mammals and birds. Modern amphibians evolved about 75 million years ago and have not changed significantly since.

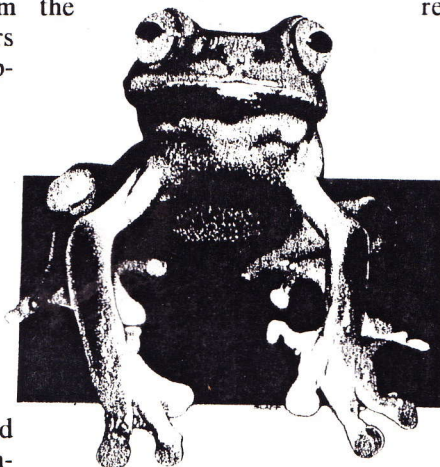
These guys are tough. They preceded and then outlived the dinosaurs. They survived innumerable ice ages, meteors and volcanoes. They witnessed the continents dividing and learned to co-exist with predatory mammals and birds.

However, frogs, toads, salamanders and newts all over the world began disappearing in the 1970's. Scientists from every continent have documented the rapid, global decline. "Amphibians are survivors," says David Wake, director of the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology at the University of California at Berkely. "If they're checking out now, I think it is significant". Like many scientists, he believes amphibians are the planet's premier indicator species, and that their recent disappearance is a signal that something has gone very wrong with our native ecosystems.

Worldwide Declines

AUSTRALIA: The Queensland gastric brooding frog (*Rheobatrachus silus*) evolved in remote sections of the Canondale and Blackall Mountain Ranges. This marvelous frog developed adaptations to protect its young against predation by swallowing its own eggs, brooding and hatching them in its stomach, then spitting up well-developed tadpoles ready to fend for themselves. The discovery of the Queensland gastric brooding frog in 1973 promised

* Kieran Suckling is the Director of the Greater Gila Biodiversity Project. His specialties include biology, storytelling and truck mechanics



"Amphibians are survivors. If they're checking out now, I think its quite significant"

exciting glimpses into the mysteries of pregnancy and digestion as well as possible remedies for ulcers and stomach ailments. By 1980, however, the gastric brooding frog was extinct.

SOUTH AFRICA: South Africa's Cape Province supports an amazingly diverse herptofauna. Three endemic frogs - the micro frog (*Micro batrachella capensis*), the Table Mountain ghost frog (*Heleophryne rosei*) and the Cape platanna (*Xenopus gilli*) - are highly endangered due to habitat destruction. All have been reduced to just a few barely viable populations.

INDIA: The Western Ghats support 120 tropical species, Asia's richest amphibian population, including 13 of India's 15 caecilians (limbless amphibians). Two frog species - *Ansonia ornata* and *Micrixalus saxicola* - are declining due to water pollution from teak and rubber estates. The bronzed frog (*Rana temporalis*) is being

sacrificed to biology students as scientific collectors take virtually every tropical amphibian they see. For example, the Field Museum of Natural History of Chicago and the National Museum of Natural History of Delhi collected 1,500 amphibians and reptiles in a 48 square mile area in just six weeks in 1982. More than half were taken from a single location.

BRITAIN: Habitat loss is devastating amphibians in Britain, which has lost 182,000 ponds in the last 30 years. Deforestation and acid rain have left 50% of the remaining ponds with no amphibians. Acid rain is responsible for extirpating Natterjack toads (*Bufo calamita*) from the lowland heaths which once supported half of the British population. The common frog (*Rana temporaria*) has also suffered mass mortality in recent years, but no one knows why.

SOUTH AMERICA: Between 1979 and 1982, six frog species were extirpated and seven declined dramatically at the University of San Paolo's field

station, in Boracea, Brazil. Eight of 13 frog species in Brazil's Reserva Atlantica have disappeared since 1981. High elevation amphibians in the Peruvian Andes are declining due to huge chemical influxes from the burning of tropical forests

COSTA RICA: In the early 1980's, golden toads (*Bufo periglenes*) were common in the Monteverde Cloud Forest Preserve of Costa Rica. Only a few years later, they were rare, and the species is now feared to be extinct. Other amphibians in the "protected" forest are also mysteriously disappearing.

MEXICO: Salamanders were common in pine forests near Oaxaca, Mexico in the early 1970's - 80 or more lived beneath the bark of a single log. By the 1980's, they were very difficult to find.

UNITED STATES: When humans discovered the Las Vegas Valley leopard frog (*Rana pipians*) in 1992, it was already extinct. So is the relict leopard frog (*Rana onca*). The Tarahumara leopard frog (*Rana tarahumarae*) has departed from the US and following it are the Chiricahua (*R. Chiricahuensis*) and lowland (*R. yavapaiensis*) leopard frogs. So is the Huachuca tiger salamander (*Ambystoma tigrinum stebbinsi*). In the Sierra Nevadas, the California Coast Range, the Pacific Northwest, the Cascades, the Northern Rockies and the Appalachians, the story is similar, with at least 15 species of frogs or salamanders declining in numbers or heading for extinction.

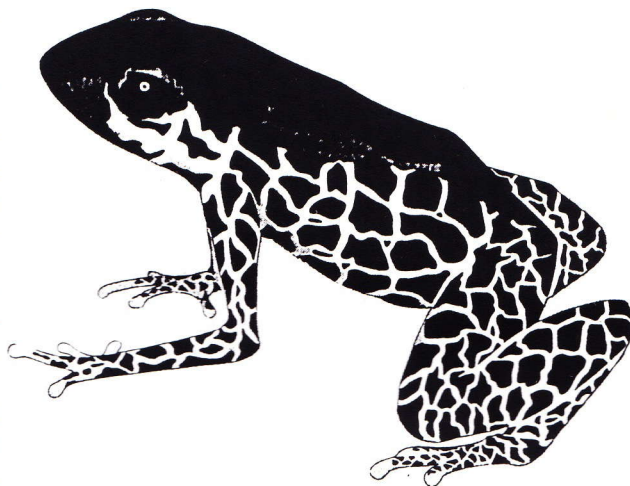
Unnatural Hazards Have Devastating Effects

The stories go on and on: Germany, Nova Scotia, Panama, the Swiss Alps...scientists aren't sure what is causing amphibians to disappear. The worldwide pattern suggests a single global cause to some, but no one has been able to determine what it is. Others point to a host of factors threatening individual populations at the local level. Long-term studies have been proposed, but many species may disappear before they are completed. "We don't have much time," explains James McMahon, ecologist at Utah State University. By the time we can get enough data, the problem may be past us and unsolvable."

Habitat Loss

Like every other species on this planet, amphibians are threatened by large-scale habitat alteration and destruction. Henry Wilbur of Duke University believes habitat destruction is "clearly the dominant thing going on" with amphibians. Logging old growth forests, compacting soil, draining wetlands, damming rivers, clearing streamside vegetation, diverting creeks, and depleting water tables all take a heavy toll. So cut it out.

Amphibians live in a wide variety of habitats and are very diverse in their needs. In general, however, oviposition (egg laying sites), nursery sites, daytime resting spots and hibernacula are most crucial. The yellow-legged frog, for example, requires a solid substrate in flowing water for ovipositioning. The red-legged frog requires deep



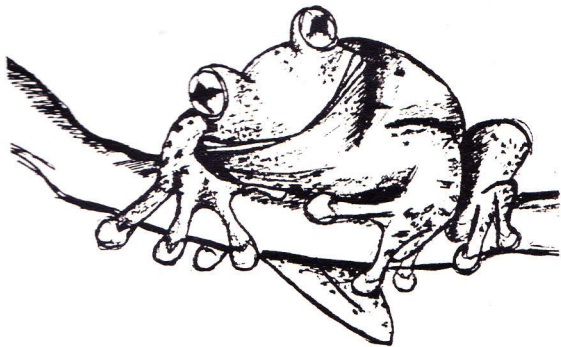
pools fringed with thick vegetation. Both are threatened by siltation, vegetation loss and water depletion associated with overgrazing, pumping, water diversion and logging. Many amphibians require cool microclimates created by overhanging vegetation, deep water, and pools carved by large fallen trees in creeks. Embryonic development is particularly threatened

"The worldwide pattern suggests a single global cause to some...Others point to a host of factors"

by high temperatures. The oviposition and developmental characteristics of bull-frogs, however, allows them to thrive in thermally altered habitats which extirpate or stress native amphibians. The Jemez Mountains salamander and the Sacramento Mountains salamander require large downed trees, porous soils, and cool, humid air. Like many amphibian old growth obligates, they are threatened by logging. Many rainforest amphibians in India are also threatened by excessive collection of forest duff for compost.

Acid Rain

Acid rain, caused by emission of air pollutants such as copper sulphate, lowers pH levels in streams, lakes and forest floors. Acid rain has killed frogs in Sweden and embryonic spotted salamanders (*Ambystoma maculatum*) in temporary pools in the northeast US. Acid rain originating from copper smelters in southeastern Arizona and Sonora, Mexico are thought to be responsible for the recent extirpation of the Tarahumara frog from the US. Decreased pH can also cause abnormal development, reduced sperm motility, poor ion regulatory capabilities, and decreased growth rates.



Bullfrogs

First introduced into western North America in 1896 to replace commercially overexploited red-legged frog populations in California, bullfrogs (*Rana catesbeiana*) have been implicated in the decline of dozens of western amphibians and reptiles. These voracious green meanies have devastated western aquatic and riparian ecosystems. The effect of these little monsters cannot be separated from habitat destruction and other anthropogenic effects, however, because bullfrogs, like cowbirds and great horned owls, thrive in degraded landscapes and gain a competitive advantage when native species are stressed by pollution or disease. Bullfrogs kill directly. Large and aggressive, they eat amphibian eggs, larvae, and adults. Competition with bullfrogs is insignificant, as wild amphibian populations rarely reach densities sufficient to deplete food sources.

Fish

Introduction of exotic game fish into native ecosystems, especially western ecosystems which have far fewer native fish than those in the east, is also an unmitigated biological disaster. Amphibians which have not evolved anti-fish defense or avoidance behaviours are vulnerable to fish predation.

Fish eat tadpoles and amphibian eggs and adults. In fact, they are the only purely aquatic predators capable of extirpating amphibians. Amphibians, therefore, have evolved ways of avoiding predation by native fish. Ranid frogs in California, for example, stay away from deeper, swifter waters preferred by native salmonids, cottids, and cyprinids. When unable to avoid these habitats they lay eggs at a time which coincides with the absence of fish due to migration. Amphibians have evolved behaviours and physiognomies to protect themselves from other native predatory fish. They



are unpalatable to some and are capable of avoiding others. However they are often unable to recognize or avoid exotic fish, to which they are tasty treats. Native California predatory fish feed by sight, foraging mainly in clear water columns or above exposed surfaces. Tadpoles escape these by remaining in aquatic vegetation, rocky crevices, or beneath benthic sediments - exactly where introduced sunfish and catfish prefer to forage. Bullfrogs, the green menace, tolerate exotic fish better than other amphibians so they take over as the natives are driven out, reducing the chances of successful recolonization. Add a little habitat destruction and decreasing cover, and native amphibians are in big trouble

Disease

Many amphibians suffer from red-legged disease, a pathogenic condition associated primarily with the bacterium *Aeromonas hydrophila*. Red-leg weakens amphibian immune systems, making them more susceptible to deadly diseases or simply too weak to evade predators. Red-leg disease is sometimes described as an amphibian AIDS virus. Some scientists believe bullfrogs act as a vector to introduce *hydrophila* into native amphibian populations. Native frogs also play host to a variety of parasites that do not appear to attach as readily to bullfrogs.

Toxins

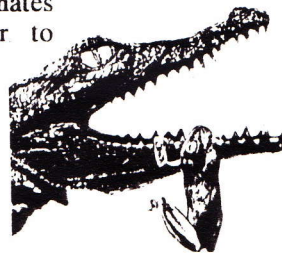
Amphibians, especially those at lower elevations, are exposed to a wide variety of pesticides, herbicides and heavy metals. They can kill larvae directly or cause hyperactivity and prolonged premetamorphic development which increase vulnerability to predation. You guessed it, bullfrogs, the green scourge, are much less sensitive to toxicity, giving them a predatory advantage.

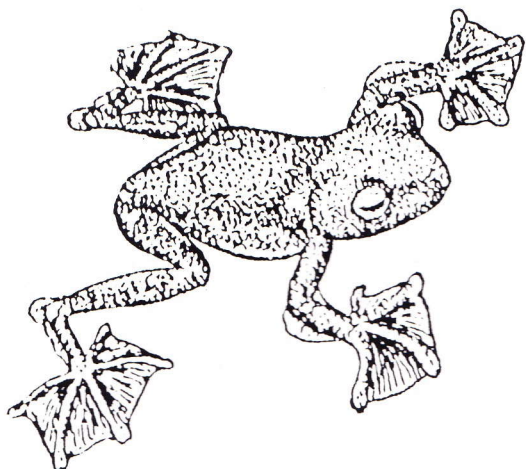
Roads

Cars (and their drivers, and the people who built the roads, and industrial civilization, and the whole decrepit ball of rotting christian wax) are responsible for millions of squashed amphibians every year. Salamanders and newts, for example, often have to cross roads to get from their forest hibernation grounds to their aquatic breeding grounds. Heavy traffic on a poorly placed road can decimate an entire population. Research indicates that bullfrogs are equally susceptible to automotive predation.

Ozone Depletion

Many scientists are worried about the effects of increased levels of ultraviolet (UV) radiation due to ozone depletion. Amphibian embryos are known to be particularly vulnerable to UV poisoning. Frogs in cooler climates lay their eggs closer to pond surfaces to maximize solar warmth. Their eggs are therefore more highly exposed to UV's.





Human Predation

They do taste a little like chicken. The French call them *grenouille*, and eat some 3,000-4,000 metric tons of frog's legs each year. That adds up to a staggering 60 to 80 million frogs - a tenfold increase in the last 20 years. Local supplies of "edible frogs" (*Rana esculenta*) were outstripped in the 1950s. The majority of frogs eaten in France today are Asian bullfrogs from Indonesia and Bangladesh which are now declining as well. India outlawed Asian bullfrog exports in 1987 to counter insect outbreaks coincident with the frog's decline. It has since increased pesticide use and introduced exotic frog species. Asian bullfrogs, meanwhile, continue to be smuggled out of India to be sold in France as "Bangladesh Frogs".

Catastrophic Events

Floods and droughts appear to be responsible for the loss of some amphibian populations. These events, however, cannot be responsible for simultaneous worldwide population declines. Most amphibian communities are structured in metapopulations or demes which periodically suffer local extinction and are then recolonised. A species in decline, however, may not occur in large enough numbers to recolonise after natural extinctions. Habitat loss and the presence of exotic predators can fragment suitable habitat in such a way that recolonisation is prevented.

Amphibians are critical elements of natural diversity, often constituting the highest vertebrate biomass in aquatic ecosystems. Their disappearance means the loss of a major food source for fish, birds and mammals. They are themselves carnivores, being some of the most important consumers of insects and small vertebrates. These species proliferate unnaturally in the absence of amphibians, causing ecosystem imbalance.

Feeding high on the food chain, amphibians are affected by anything harming the chain below them. They are good measures of air, water and soil quality. That's one reason why so many scientists consider amphibians the best indicators of global environmental health.

There's good reason for alarm - the recent global amphibian decline indicates far more than an amphibian problem, or an ecosystem problem. It is telling us that the planet as a whole is being stressed to the point where it can no longer sustain entire classes of species.

What is to be Done?

The first step in turning back amphibian decline in the US is to protect every endangered amphibian under the *Endangered Species Act* (ESA). The Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management, the Park Service, the Department of Defence and the Fish and Wildlife Service manage most of our public lands, where most amphibians hang out. At this point, the highest use of our public lands must be to preserve the diverse fabric of evolution which is falling apart all around us. While all federal agencies are required to protect native species, history has shown time and again that unless a species is protected under the ESA, it will not be adequately protected.

The **Greater Gila Biodiversity Project** (GGBP) needs your help to protect North American amphibians. We recently petitioned to protect the Huachuachua tiger salamander under the Endangered Species Act and will soon petition for the Ramsey Canyon leopard frog and the Chiricahua leopard frog. We are also working to reintroduce the Tarahumara frog. The Biodiversity Legal Foundation (BLF) is also working on amphibians; the BLF recently petitioned to protect the western boreal toad and is working to protect the Wyoming frog, the spotted frog, the northern leopard frog and the Amargosa toad. The GGBP needs funding. We also need local activists to research endangered amphibian species and populations in their own ecosystems.

For more information, or to learn how you can help, contact the Greater Gila Biodiversity Project, PO Box 742, Silver City, NM 88062; phone (505) 538-0961.

Source: Shamelessly stolen from US Earth First!'s great newspaper of the same name, November 1993.



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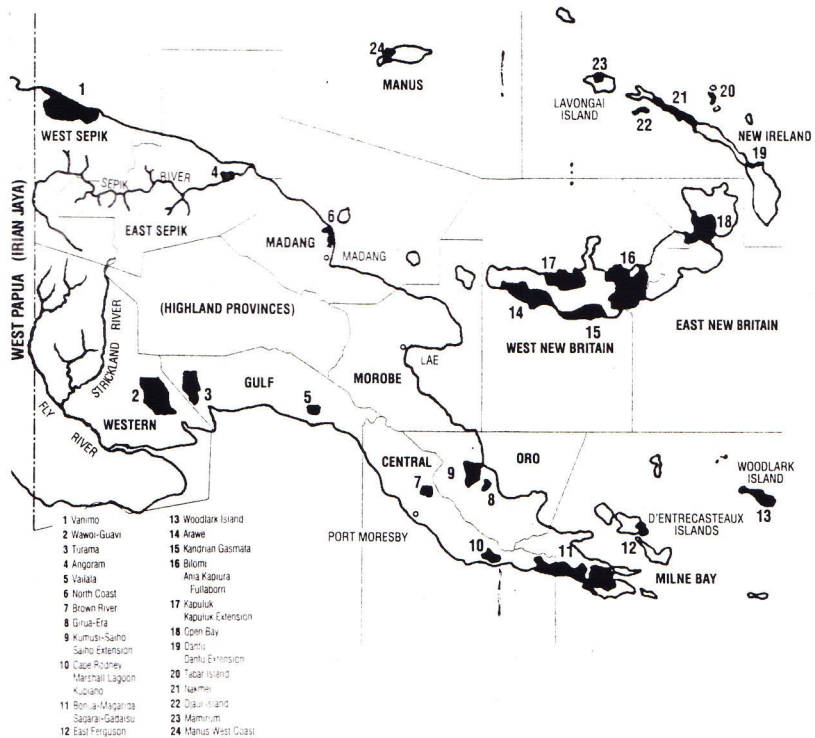
Progressive Forest Act Threatened by Amendments

In October of 1993, Prime Minister Wingti of Papua New Guinea (PNG) announced that the National Executive Council had approved progressive guidelines, including log export restrictions, for the national Forestry Act. At the same time, an amendment (called the Tulapi amendment) has been proposed which, as the Melanesian Environmental Foundation states, "would essentially return all power over forestry in PNG to the National Forestry Board, and then stack that board with members who are pro-company."

This latest round of battles between reformers and industry is proving to be heated as PNG's resources are in increasing demand. In the past, PNG has faced great amounts of corruption in its forest industry. The Barnett report, a full judicial inquiry into the forest industry completed in July 1989, documented the common practice of transfer pricing, bribery, non-compliance with contracts, violations of land owners rights and environmental crimes. Although these practices are illegal, they are still common today.

Under extreme conditions, the new guidelines and log export ban are vital steps to regaining some control

Since 1992, logging in PNG has reached unprecedented rates, increasing by nearly 400% according to a report by the Pacific Heritage Foundation, a PNG-based NGO. One Malaysian company, Rimbunan Hijau (RH), through a complicated web of affiliates, controls over 80% of PNG log exports. Under such extreme conditions, the new guidelines and especially the log export ban are vital steps to regaining some control over this rapacious industry. Because most Southeast Asian countries have so depleted their resources that they have been forced to impose log export bans, countries like Korea and Japan, who have extensive milling operations, are willing to pay top dollar for PNG's whole logs. RH, responsible for around-the-clock log



To curb corruption, the government has engaged a Swiss company, (SGS) to monitor all exports

ging in Sarawak, has now brought these vicious practices to PNG. Logging and skidding is taking place along streams and rivers and on slopes greater than thirty degrees. Restricted species are being logged and exported. Water courses are being blocked, causing redirection of flow. All these practices are illegal under current PNG legislation, but exist as common practice.

In a progressive attempt to curb some of this corruption, the PNG government has engaged a Swiss company, Society General

Surveillance (SGS) to monitor all exports, checking for evidence of transfer pricing in which corporations undervalue log prices for export. PNG activists have applauded this as a positive step. Under the Minister's new guidelines, there would be tools in place to begin to deal with the corruption that allows illegal logging practices to go unpunished. However, the Tulapi amendment poses a severe threat to this legislation and would in fact legitimize many of the above practices.

According to the National Alliance of Non-Governmental Organizations of PNG (NANGO), radical changes will be made to the Forestry Act by the Tulapi amendment. Timber permits will become transferable and avail-



able to anyone regardless of whether they are registered in PNG. Logging licenses will no longer be necessary to engage in logging activities, and applicants for timber permits will no longer be required to provide fees, project particulars, maps of the area in question, details of the proposed project, or written consent of landowners in order to proceed with logging.

If things continue at the present rate, the Pacific Heritage Foundation estimates that PNG's "massive forest resource will be effectively wiped out in far less than a generation."

What You Can Do:

Become more informed on PNG. Inform your community, representatives, and foreign ministers; asking them to support reform in PNG.

If you write only one letter about the environment this week, make it this one.

Please use the following sample letter as a basis to write Vice President Al Gore (if in US), Foreign Minister Gareth Evans (Australia), or your Foreign Minister (Europe or other). Also, send copies of your letter to PNG Minister of Forests Tim Neville.

SAMPLE LETTER

May we recommend the following letter, sent to PNG by the World Rainforest Movement, as a good model for continued letter writing efforts:

I welcome Prime Minister Paias Wingti's proposal calling for a log export ban in Papua New Guinea, and for the intro-

duction of a forest policy to reform the timber industry further by ensuring the sustainable management of forest resources with benefits accruing to landowners.

We realize that the action taken by Mr. Wingti and the Minister of Forests, Tim Neville, to reform the forestry industry is difficult politically, and may initially result in the loss of millions of kina in revenue. However, stricter control and careful monitoring of the logging industry will ensure that in the long-term both indigenous landowners and the country will benefit more from PNG's forest resources.

Government initiatives to halt the rampant destruction caused by logging operations and which institute forest management plans that protect the ecological integrity of the forests, are supported by those concerned about deforestation in PNG. We are deeply concerned by the reports that logging companies, including some from Malaysia, have been conducting their timber cutting operations in a manner that is damaging to Papua New Guinea economically, socially and ecologically.

As forest timber resources expire and logging activities decline in Sarawak and other once-forested countries in Asia, many Asian logging companies are looking to expand abroad. These companies are conducting their business abroad in a manner that often exceeds the acceptable methods used in their home countries, and where they are faced with increasing local

protest.

PNG is one of the few countries in the Asia-Pacific region which has not yet introduced a log export ban to curb the rate of forest destruction. The declining supply of raw logs from Southeast Asia has driven up log prices and caused an exacerbation of the illegal timber trade in the region.

This combination of factors has, therefore, made the forests of PNG appear to be a lucrative timber depository which foreign logging companies are eager to plunder. Despite the fact that indigenous landowners have legal title to 90 per cent of PNG land, such is the greed of these logging companies that they are prepared to corrupt government officials, use intimidation and employ slick public relations methods to maintain their timber cutting operations.

I strongly condemn all Malaysian and foreign logging companies that exploit PNG forests with scant regard for the social and ecological costs of their operations, and whose practices are at times illegal under current PNG legislation.

I support both the Prime Minister and the Minister for Forests in their initiatives to regain control of forest resources for local people.

Letters can be addressed to:

Vice President Albert Gore The White House 1600 Pennsylvania Ave. Washington, DC 20500

Hon. Gareth Evans Suite 68 MH Parliament House Canberra, ACT 2600 Australia

Mr. Tim Neville Minister of Forests Forest Headquarters PO Box 5055 Boroko, NCD Papua New Guinea Fax:(675) country code 25 4433

Source: Prepared by Ecological Enterprises for the Rainforest Action Network



Japan's Tropical Timber Imports Shift from Malaysia to PNG

Most Phillipine forests have already perished, followed by Thailand and much of Indonesia, and recently Malaysia. Papua New Guinea (PNG) is increasingly filling Japan's insatiable appetite for tropical timber. Japan's tropical timber import figures for the first half of 1993 showed a shift from Malaysia to PNG.

Japan's Hardwood Log Imports Jan-May 1993 (Japan Lumber Importers Association) (Units: cubic meters)

Region	Jan-May '93	%	% more or less than Jan-May '92
Sabah	293,267	9.0	-67.8
Sarawak	2,050,883	62.7	-25.0
Malaysia Sub-total	2,344,150	71.7	-35.7
Solomon Islands	150,408	4.6	52.3
PNG	697,014	21.3	45.1
Other	78,039	2.4	46.8
Grand Total	2,672,472	100.00	-23

Note: Calculations by SCC. Figures for plywood imports from Malaysia are by Japan Plywood Manufacturers Associations (2 July '93, Nikkan Mokuzaï Shimbun), and others are from Japan Lumber Importers Associations (JLIA) (29 Sept. '92, 29 July '93, Nikkan Mokuzaï Shimbun)

The decline in log imports from Malaysia has coincided with significant increases in imports of plywood from Indonesia and logs from PNG. Log imports from PNG in Jan-May '93 increased 52.3% on the same period in 1992, accounting for an unprecedented 21.3% of Japan's tropical log imports during the first 5 months of this year. (PNG logs constituted 11.6% of Japan's tropical log imports in 1992, and 8.1% in 1991.) Tropical plywood imports in Jan-May 1993 exceeded those for the same period in 1992 by 23%, showing the extent to which Japanese plywood is losing ground to foreign competition, especially from the Indonesia. The jump in plywood imports from Malaysia, indicates a strengthened emphasis on local processing for export.

There is little reason to rejoice over these trends. Shifted pressures are causing a new wave of environmental destruction and violations of indigenous peoples' rights in PNG and the Solomon Islands. With logging in Sabah and Sarawak quickly becoming a sunset industry, there are reports that a number of the Chinese Malaysian logging companies that pillaged the forests of Sarawak are now launching operations in PNG and the Solomon Is.

Logging in Sarawak is also affecting more and more environmentally sensitive areas such as water catchment areas, as increasingly inaccessible areas are targeted. The situation on the ground may thus be worsening even as logging amounts are decreasing. With an increased em-

phasis on local wood processing, Japanese trading companies such as Nissho Iwai, Sumitomo Forestry and Marubeni are investing in joint ventures with Malaysian firms to establish plywood factories in Sarawak, representing a new stage in Japan's involvement in exploitation of Sarawak's forests. And with the strong appreciation of the yen, there is reason to fear that an upturn in the construction industry could trigger a new boom in imports of construction materials. There is a need for strict monitoring of these various new developments. There can be no long-term solution to Japan's involvement in worldwide forest destruction without drastic reform of the institutionalized wastefulness of Japan's construction industry. SCC will continue to focus attention on these structural issues, promoting dialogue to achieve the necessary changes.

Major efforts are needed now in PNG, where 80% of the original forest cover remains, but where log exports have more than tripled in the last 12 months. We must all support alternative development options while peoples within PNG still are free to make development decisions.

Source: Sarawak Campaign Committee, Mori No Koe, Voice of the Forest, Japan and the World's Forests, December 1993. Taken from electronic mail conference, rain-for-general message posted by Ecological Enterprises with permission from SCC.

Sarawak Campaign Committee 408 United Bldg., 4-3 Sakuragaoka, Shibuya-ku Tokyo 150 Japan

Old Growth Forest Actions

Bulga Plateau

*Wingham Management Area,
NSW (Near Taree, North of
Sydney)*

Following on from the battle over Compartment 22 in June '93, things have heated up once more for Wingham Forest Action Group who are currently busy with two blockades of old growth compartments. Having run out of the old growth allocated to them by the Griener Government in 1990, State Forests, formerly the Forestry Commission, and Boral Timber (which is responsible for 90% of logging on the North Coast) are forcing the National Parks and Wildlife Service to issue temporary licenses to "take and kill" endangered species, thereby sidestepping the still to be determined Fauna Impact Statement.



Forest action at Wingham, NSW

Licences to take and kill

Fears are mounting that the Statement will never be determined, as any determination that would satisfy forestry interests would be wide open to a challenge, and any proper assessment of the fauna in this area would preclude old growth logging.

Blockades have been occurring since late November, and in early December, a week of solid rain allowed a small but very hardworking team to erect a seemingly formidable array of obstructions along the road into Compartment 209. Two suspended platforms, three configurations of tripods, an arm pipe embedded in concrete in the road, and pile of debris required the efforts of 30 police, a cherry-picker and bulldozer to reopen the compartment. Disappointingly, this was done with surprising speed, no rescue squad personnel, and an alarming disregard for safety.

The following week a forest defender, occupying a suspended platform along a road being built through rainforest into a stand of gigantic blue gums, was sent swinging after a tree bulldozed over by State Forests workers hit the platform as it came crashing to the ground. Though present at the site, police made no efforts to restrain the workers, and actually erased all video footage of this event after arresting the cameraman. Complaints are being pursued, and the action looks set to continue.

East Gippsland

Scene of this summer's most high profile blockades, a very well organised coalition, the East Gippsland Forest Alliance (EGFA) has been hosting a team of many of the bravest and most dedicated forest defenders in Australia. Commencing with the Goongerah Forest Festival in late November, followed by a mass action of 300 people occupying an old growth coupe, action has followed action in an ongoing effort to pressure the Federal Government to enforce the provisions of the National Forest Policy.

National Forest Policy Ignored

This Policy was signed but subsequently ignored by all mainland states. The environment movement has been dealt a major blow by the Keating Government's failure to halt the renewal of export woodchip licenses for 1994.

EGFA's tribe have ensured major coverage of the issues, and have successfully exposed the ongoing destruction of Australia's native forests. Actions in the forests of East Gippsland, in Canberra and at the chipmill in Eden over December have even gained international exposure, and the latest word is that EGFA is all fresh and ready to go again early in the New Year.

Woodchipping and Federal Government Irresponsibility.

The export of woodchips from Australia began in 1970. Since then it has rapidly expanded, with more than half the trees now cut from native forests being woodchipped. Currently five and a half million tonnes of trees are exported from Australia each year as woodchips.

In December 1993, environmentalists lobbied for more environmentally sensitive restrictions on woodchipping. Environment Minister Ros Kelly's response was woeful.

by Dailan Pugh of the Northeast Forest Alliance

As woodchipping has expanded, there has been a dramatic increase in forest clearing, logging intensity and volumes of wood being removed from native forests. Environmental damage has escalated as wildlife habitats are decimated, soils compacted, soil washed into streams, water yields reduced, as Australian forests are further degraded for the quick buck.

Oldgrowth forests, identified wilderness areas and rainforests are being used to satisfy the appetite of this voracious industry. For example in the three years 1988 to 1990 alone, 144,000 cubic metres of the rainforest tree Myrtle Beech (*Nothofagus cunninghamii*) were specifically felled for woodchips.

**"From 1988 - 1990,
144,000 cubic metres of
the rainforest tree Myrtle
Beech were felled for
woodchips.**

There are eight hardwood woodchip export operations in Australia. Four of these were required to prepare Environmental Impact Statements (EISs) under the Federal *Environmental Protection (Impact of Proposals) Act*. One has prepared an EIS for some of its source area (Harris-Daishowa) and one currently has an EIS for some of its sources being assessed by the federal government (Sawmillers Exports). The government has exempted most recent operations and major expansions from having to prepare EISs.

By volume, Australia exports



Tree platform at a NSW forest blockade

almost twice as much timber as it imports. As 95% of timber exports are in the form of woodchips, our timber imports cost four times as much as our exports. It is not the way of a clever country to sell its timber for one eighth of what it pays other countries for theirs.

**"It is not the way of a
clever country to sell its
timber for one eighth of
what it pays other
countries for theirs"**

The environment movement made a concerted attempt, leading up to the December 1993 annual licence renewals, to get the Federal Government to at least include conditions on the licences which ensured that woodchips are not obtained from high conservation value oldgrowth forests, wildernesses, habitats of endangered species and forests not being managed on an ecologically sustainable basis.

The Minister for the Environment, Ros Kelly, supported con-

ditions along these lines and it is reputed that she had the numbers in Cabinet to get her way. Despite this, she succeeded only in getting one very vague statement referring to endangered species as a licence condition and an agreement with the NSW forestry department that it wouldn't obtain woodchips from a few areas which they weren't going to log anyway.

Following Kelly's abysmal, and possibly deliberate failure to achieve any real constraints on export woodchip licences, there were calls for her resignation on the grounds that she is the worst federal environment minister in Australia's history.

**"There were calls for her
resignation on the
grounds that she is the
worst federal environment
minister in history"**

Both Kelly and the then Resource Minister, Michael Lee, were instead rewarded by the Prime Minister. Kelly was

retained as Environment Minister and given increased responsibilities while Lee was promoted to a more senior Ministry.

The Federal Government has chosen to abrogate its legal obligations under the *Environmental Protection (Impact of Proposals) Act* and *Endangered Species Protection Act*, and refused to accept its responsibilities under the National Forest Policy Statement, National Strategy for Ecologically Sustainable Development, Convention of Biological Diversity and Agenda 21.

It is clear that as far as the Australian Government is concerned the export of woodchips to make paper is more important than the environmental degradation caused in obtaining those woodchips - or the commitments printed on such paper.

The environment movement is becoming increasingly frustrated with the Labor Federal Government and its abrogation of environmental and legal responsibilities. With many ALP politicians only managing to win the last election on green preferences, they might not be around after the next election.

Sawmillers Exports Ltd. - a Case History

In 1981 Sawmillers Exports Ltd. were given Federal Government approval to export 350,000 tonnes per annum of wood chips from north-east NSW for 15 years. The EIS prepared had only considered the use of sawmill wastes and stated that three years of research should be under taken before woodchips were obtained directly from forests. Despite this approval was also given for so-called logging "residues".

In 1983 Sawmillers Exports created a pile of chips derived from trees felled specifically for woodchips and requested the Federal Resource Minister to grant export approval. They complained that otherwise they would have to sell them at a loss to a local hardboard plant. The promised 3 years of research

had not been attempted.

The Environment Minister objected on the grounds that a new EIS was required to assess the impacts. The Resources Minister ignored the Environment Minister's protests and secretly gave approval for the export of woodchips derived from the specific felling of trees and clearing operations until 1989. This was subsequently renewed with no further assessment.

In 1988, still without any specific studies, SEPL's quota was secretly increased by 150,000 tonnes to 500,000 tonnes.

Following an intense lobbying effort, the Resource Minister finally agreed in 1990 to refer the felling of trees and clearing of forests for woodchips to the Environment Minister to determine whether an EIS was required. Her department decided it was, and finally in 1993 a 'draft' EIS was put on public display.

At the same time the draft EIS was released, the Resource Minister renewed Sawmillers Exports approval for the sources covered by the EIS for a further 9 months. The Federal Government intends to fast track the EIS and have it rubber-stamped before mid-1994 so that Sawmillers Exports can continue business as usual.

The EIS is deficient, misleading, inconsistent and fails to meet the requirements of federal legislation or the variety of national and international agreements to which the Federal Government is a signatory.

The next few months will reveal if there is any intent on behalf of the Federal ALP to change their ways and stop ignoring the law and the agreements they have entered into. Based on its current attitude there is not much hope that an environmentally responsible result will ensue.



PMTension

Towards the end of 1993, a diplomatic row erupted between Australia and Malaysia when Australian Prime Minister Keating labelled his Malaysian counterpart "recalcitrant" for refusing to attend a meeting of a Southeast Asian regional organisation. As the following excerpt from a letter by Anja Light points out, there are plenty of more significant criticisms that Keating could have made.

" * Mathir continues to insist that logging operations in his country, (carried out at the fastest rate on Earth), are sustainable, despite the findings of international bodies including the World Bank and the International Tropical Timber Organisation (ITTO).

* He denies any miscarriage of justice after hundreds of native people are jailed for peacefully protecting their land.

* His government refutes a statement - signed by 25 eyewitnesses, in October 1993 - of gross brutality by the military against the Penan tribespeople (one of the last tribes of nomadic hunter-gathers on Earth). Quote:

" "All our huts were burnt. Our rice fields were bulldozed, and five bombs (tear gas) were thrown at us men, women and children and elderly people. The police had shields and helmets and they were hitting us without pity. Some of us bled and fell unconscious."

"Malaysian government answer (New Straits Times, 29.10.93):

" 'We have never used force to suppress the Penan or any other native group.'

"I believe acts like these may prompt one to call another recalcitrant, or even obdurate, compassionless, intemperate, pitiless, ruthless, cruel, uncaring. . ."

ANJA LIGHT, Rainforest Information Centre, PO Box 368, Lismore, NSW, 2480.

Anja Light is director of the newly-formed Rainforest Information Centre, Gold Coast, in South East Queensland for details, see insert in this magazine.

The Mitsubishi Campaign

Global Grassroot Challenge to Mitsubishi

In the June issue of WRR the Rainforest Information Centre promised a "well planned and tightly coordinated campaign" to support the San Francisco-based Rainforest Action Network's splendid efforts at inspiring all global citizens to boycott Mitsubishi -the Great Forest Destroyer.

Since then, the campaign has sunk its roots into the east coast of Australia with active groups in nine major cities. Student groups have shown solid enthusiasm for getting involved in actions, supported by existing Rainforest Action Groups (RAGs). They have focused their efforts on creating at least five media events at the Mitsubishi-sponsored National Basketball League series, unfurling banners urging a boycott of all Mitsubishi products in full view of TV cameras and spectators.

During World Rainforest Week, RAGs set off a media tremor at the National Auto Show, when a demonstrator abseiled from the roof above the Mitsubishi stand with a banner saying "Please Consider the Rainforest - Boycott Mitsubishi" Three others handcuffed themselves to steering wheels below the banner.

Around the same time, in the USA, over fourteen groups demonstrated against auto dealerships and autoplants. In the Czech Republic, the Rainbow Movement organized demonstrations in ten cities including Prague. They hung posters, held lectures, and held a march of tropical animals through the city. Fantas tic! The word is getting around.

Positive Results

Mitsubishi Motor Sales of America hired a consulting firm to audit its environmental record and to tour Mitsubishi Corporation's Daiya operation in Sarawak, Malaysia. The consultants were shown the infamous "reforestation" project at Bintulu and an old and newly logged area. As usual, Mitsubishi did not reveal the full picture, never mentioning to the consultants



that most of their timber came from other Sarawak logging operations.

The consulting firm is also conducting a telephone survey to detect the extent of damage to Mitsubishi's reputation in the USA. It will then advise the Mitsubishi Company how to counter the Boycott campaign. Let's hope they don't waste paper churning out any glossy four-colour misinformation booklets, full of half truths and misrepresentation.

"...instead Mitsubishi should make some real changes"

Perhaps instead Mitsubishi could start to make some real changes, and lead the way in making pro-life, ecologically sound choices. They have plenty of room to improve.

RAN has just completed a report on Mitsubishi's Canadian Chopstick Manufacturing Co. in Fort Nelson. They found that 85% of the wood that Mitsubishi cut was wasted just because it was stained. They also discovered that the way the loggers stack the wood inhibits regeneration, waste disposal plans are unsatisfactory and the promised \$7

million in benefits was an illusion. Meanwhile in British Columbia and the Tongas National Forest, they continue to clear-cut with lots of wastage. Such greed and waste marks Mitsubishi as an icon of megalomaniacal, earth-raping materialism.

"an Icon of Megalomaniacal, Earth-raping materialism"

In 1994, RIC plans to spread the Boycott Mitsubishi message to many more consumers. Any groups or individuals who want to act as agents for the campaign please contact us. We can supply you with an International Organisers Manual, supporting literature, videos, artwork for posters, and a national strategy. We hope to make 1994 the year Mitsubishi regrets it ever chopped a single tree.

Please help spread the word. Mitsubishi must start to see that ravaging the forests and other ecosystems is an insult to all life and landrights. The corporation must quickly claim responsibility for what it does in forests and change its behaviour if it wants to make amends with consumers and the Earth.

TOKYO'S NEW TIMBER POLICY: Still Far From A Solution

On June 18, 1993 the Tokyo Metropolitan Government announced its new policy on reducing tropical timber use in Tokyo construction projects. Though the policy shows some points of improvement, it comes as a disappointment in light of the extreme urgency of the situation in Sarawak and the need for immediate action to drastically reduce Japan's tropical timber imports.

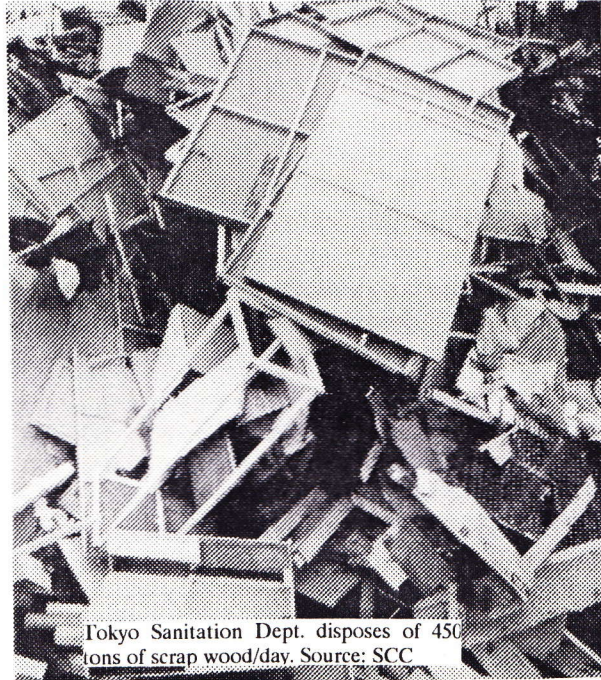
Tokyo, with about one tenth of the population of Japan, is potentially in a position to play a leadership role among local governments in Japan.

Tokyo announced two main targets for construction projects it tenders:

- * Ensuring that the amount of plywood used in forms to mold concrete does not exceed the current levels;

- * Reducing the amount of tropical timber for plywood molds by 50% within 3 years, and 70% within 5 years.

Tokyo says the reduction can be faster and greater if supplies of 100% conifer plywood, and combination (tropical and temperate conifer wood) plywood are sufficient, and other factors allow.



Some Improvements

In some ways, the new policy is an improvement upon Tokyo's previous policy (announced in Oct. 1991).

Firstly, Tokyo is committed to clear goals and timetables for reducing use of tropical timber in panels for molding concrete (*konpane*). Though about 20 local governments have announced reduction policies so far, the only other ones which have slated such specific reduction goals are Osaka Prefecture, Kyoto City and Kyoto Prefecture, and only Kanagawa has given a clear timetable.

Secondly, the policy covers not only panels for molding concrete, but backing material and other applications of tropical timber (though no reduction targets are stated for these applications). So far there are only 2

**"An immediate
70% reduction
could be
achieved by
switching to
combination
plywood "**

other local governments (Kobe, Sakai City) that have stated that they will reduce tropical timber use in non-*konpane* applications.

Thirdly, specifications for Tokyo-funded construction projects will now state that contractors are to 'use combination and conifer plywood as much as possible in plywood forms for molding concrete' and to 'strive to in-

crease the number of times plywood forms are used, by increasing efficiency'. Though specifications are not legally binding, they are expected to exert considerable pressure for compliance.

Fourthly, companies will also be encouraged to reduce tropical timber use in private construction.

However, the policy is a far cry from what is needed. A major problem is that Tokyo plans to achieve its target primarily by switching to coniferous and combination plywood, without committing to reduce total use of panels for molding concrete. One would expect such a commitment if Tokyo were really serious about promoting construction methods that do not require these disposable panels.

"A switch to conifer plywood may only transport the problem to temperate forests"

A switch to conifer wood may only transport the problem to temperate forests. Further, there is little reason for the policy's to wait 3-5 years to reduce consumption of tropical timber when an immediate 70% reduction in *konpane* use could be achieved merely by switching to combination plywood. Despite repeated appeals by the Tokyo-based Sarawak Campaign Committee (SCC) and other citizens' groups, the policy does not mention the need to increase the useful life of buildings (to reduce waste resulting from the current 20-30 year rebuilding cycle), or to use more Japanese-grown timber. Tokyo first announced plans to reduce tropical timber use in October 1991. Nineteen construction sites were selected to test new methods and materials, particularly the combination plywood. In Dec. 1992, the 'Global Environmental Conservation Promotion Headquarters,' consisting of members from 16 Tokyo government departments, reviewed progress. The new policy is an outcome of such previous efforts of the Tokyo governments. The Tokyo government recognizes the large role of Japan in forest destruction in the introduction of the policy paper, stating that three-quarters of Japan's timber supply comes from overseas, and that Japan imports about 48% of the tropical hardwood logs traded worldwide. It goes further to state that 80% of these logs are made into plywood for construction materials, concrete moldings, furniture, and furnishings. Slightly more than 20% of the tropical plywood is for concrete forms, used only a few times, then disposed of. Plywood made for concrete forms has thus been the main focus of attention for reducing tropical timber use by the city. In response to the new policy, SCC sent a letter to Mayor Suzuki and released a

press statement. SCC recognized that Tokyo's new policy is an improvement over its previous policy, but expressed concern that it will not achieve the drastic reduction required to halt the environmental destruction and human rights abuses occurring in Sarawak and other tropical timber producing regions.

SCC called on Tokyo to:

1. Immediately restrict use of tropical timber in all public construction and civil engineering projects. (Amagasaki City in Hyogo Prefecture announced that it would reduce tropical timber use in all city-funded construction projects after May 1993, in order to rapidly achieve up to a 75% reduction in tropical timber use.)

2. Clearly state in project specifications that tropical timber should be avoided not only for concrete forms, but for all uses (e.g., backing panels, school furniture)

3. More aggressively use methods that do not require concrete molds at all

4. Construct buildings to last at least 100 years (in terms of materials, structure and function) in order to reduce waste not only of tropical timber, but all resources

5. Use more Japanese wood from artificial forests

6. Give administrative guidance to private industry to reduce tropical timber use

7. Exchange information with and promote reduced tropical timber use among other local governments inside and outside the Tokyo metropolitan area

8. Ensure that alternative materials used will not result in environmental destruction elsewhere: e.g., increased pressure on temperate or boreal primary forests caused by conversion to coniferous wood is not acceptable; increased use of aluminum or steel also can have severe environmental consequences.

What You Can Do

Letters are needed to encourage further reduction in rainforest timber use in Japan. The forests of Malaysia, Indonesia and increasingly Papua

New Guinea call out to you, Write a letter! The Sarawak Campaign Committee of Japan has put out the following letter requests (2 different ones).

Sample Letter 1:

Mr. Shunichi Suzuki, Governor of Tokyo Governor, Tokyo Metropolitan Government 2-8-1 Nishi-Shinjuku, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo 163-01 Japan Mr. Shunichi Suzuki, Governor of Tokyo I am glad to hear that Tokyo has announced a new policy to reduce its use of tropical timber in panels for molding concrete by 50% in 3 years. However, I am seriously concerned that the measures proposed in the new policy are inadequate to halt the severe environmental destruction and human rights abuses occurring in Sarawak and other tropical timber producing regions. A more drastic reduction is necessary. I strongly urge you to: Include here some or all of the 8 points above from SCC's press statement.

Sample Letter 2:

Mr. Tsutomu Hata Minister of Foreign Affairs 2-2-1 Kasumigaseki, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 100 Japan

Mr. Tsutomu Hata, Minister of Foreign Affairs, In Sarawak, Malaysia, commercial logging is being carried out with total disregard for indigenous peoples' customary land rights and causing severe environmental destruction. In late September, 11 indigenous Penan people in the upper Baram region in Sarawak were arrested for blockading a logging road to protect their ancestral lands. Several hundred participated in this blockade which continued for 7 months despite severe living conditions that led to the death of 9 people, including 6 children. Japan, which buys approximately half of the logs exported from Sarawak, must take responsibility. I strongly urge the Japanese government carry out the following measures: 1. Question the Malaysian government and Sarawak state government about the circumstances of the aforementioned blockade and arrests, and express concern to them regarding tropical forest destruction and violations of indigenous peoples' human rights in Sarawak. 2. Send an independent study team including NGO representatives to Sarawak to investigate forest destruction and human rights abuses there, making sure that the study team has dialogue with the affected indigenous peoples and locals NGOs. 3. Establish an immediate moratorium on imports of timber from Sarawak, until indigenous peoples' customary land rights are clearly recognized and sustainable forestry management is achieved in Sarawak. 4. Drastically reduce Japan's consumption of tropical timber. Sincerely,

Source: Sarawak Campaign Committee, Mori No Koe, Voice of the Forest, Japan and the World's Forests. December 1993

Networked electronically with permission by: Ecological Enterprises, Madison WI. ph 608 233 2194 Email: gbarry@macc.wisc.edu or switpi@igc.apc.org

A Victory for Indigenous Reserves

Federal Court of Appeals Forbids Logging in Indigenous Areas in South Para



On October 7, 1993, the Federal Court of Appeals in Brasilia strictly prohibited any logging activities in the indigenous reserves of South Para, in the Brazilian Amazon. The Nucleus for Indigenous Rights (NDI), an NGO based in Brasilia, filed a lawsuit against the logging companies Perachi, Maginco and Impar, that illegally log mahogany in those Indigenous areas. In January '93, NDI had obtained an injunction suspending any logging in the indigenous territories. Perachi appealed, and gained a temporary suspension of the injunction obtained by NDI. However, the Federal Court of Appeals, in an historical session, confirmed the suspension of all logging activities in the Indigenous areas in South Para.

Altogether, the three Indigenous areas cover 3.6 million hectares, an area larger than Belgium. The three Indigenous areas have contiguous limits and are located in one of the richest mahogany regions of Para and of the Amazon. The state of Para is responsible for 64% of the mahogany exported by Brazil, and over 80% of this total comes from Indigenous and other conservation areas. NDI believes that judicial decisions like this one will help alleviate the devastating effects of illegal logging and other predatory activities in indigenous reserves.

The support of people, organizations and rural unions from Para and other states of the Amazon, and from all over Brazil and other countries all over the world were of extreme importance in the fight against illegal logging in Indigenous areas.

Steve Schwartzman of the Environmental Defense Fund in Washington said that the decision "has potential repercussions far beyond the already substantial effect of closing three major illegal logging operations in indigenous areas in Para state. .

. "If an NGO with three lawyers can win such a decision, nothing prevents the Brazilian government from taking legal action against the owners and operators of illegal gold mines in the Yanomami area, or the multitude of other illegal loggers and miners invading indigenous and other protected areas in the Amazon. Such action is a fundamental precondition to any strategy of developing sustainable economic alternatives in the Amazon".

What You Can Do

Write to Judges Maria Divinia Vitoria and Judge Eliana Calmon. Support their decisions and urge them to continue protecting indigenous reserves against illegal logging.

Exma. Sra. Juiza Maria Vitoria, Dignissima Juiza Substitutia da 6a Vara, Federal no Distrito Federal, Justica Federal de Primeira Instancia, Setor de Autaquiass Sul Quadra 4, Bloco D Lote 7, Brasilia DF 70070-000. Fax: 55-61-225-7116

Exma Sra Juiza Eliana Calmon, Dignissima Presidente da Quarta Turma do Tribunal Regional Federal da 1a Regiao, SBS Quadra 2, ED. Aurea 40 andar, Brasilia DF 70070-100. Fax: 55-61-322-1022

YANOMAMI: The Massacre and the Role of the Powerful Anti-native Alliance

Reprinted from Amanaka's Amazon Network Info update

The recent widely reported massacre of the Yanomami Indians by Brazilian gold miners in the north Amazon village of Haximu was not an isolated event. New evidence reveals that the tragedy was just one of three carefully planned massacres of the Yanomami. Evidence reveals that the Gold miners were merely the spearhead of a concerted effort by a powerful anti-native alliance of local politicians, business interests and military leaders. The massacres are just one aspect of a concerted strategy to dismantle the Yanomami reserve, annihilate the native populations and gain control over their gold-rich territory.

Anti-Native Alliance

1. The local right wing politicians led by Rorima Governor Ottomar Pinto have always been opposed to the creation of the Yanomami Reserve, insisting that mining companies should be able to operate within the legal boundaries of the reserve. Many Federal Politicians are now calling for a revocation of Indian legal rights and the demarcation of their traditional lands. [The government recognizes 519 indigenous ares, of which only 238 have been demarcated, 197 are incomplete and 84 have yet to be touched.]

2. Key elements in Brazil's military have long viewed the Native populations as being a threat to national security. General Euclides Figueiredo argues that the Yanomami have no right to their traditional territory because " they are devoid of any intelligence, wandering around naked and breeding like animals."

3. The gold miners loggers ranchers and other business interests have the most to gain from the conflict. They make up a strong lobby which plans to exploit the rainforest regardless of the consequences.

The anti-native alliance is strong and getting stronger. Most disturbing of all is that unless the Yanomami and their friends can mount a stronger alliance there is a good chance that their foes will win in a new, frontal attack on the rainforest and its peoples.

What You Can Do

Be Part of a Strong International Native Support Alliance

Brazil, Venezuela and other Amazonian countries are very vulnerable to world public opinion, so a strong international voice can pressure Governments to control corrupt elements within thier countries. It is important that accurate and up-to-date information is disseminated around the world to support groups who will then distribute it to media outlets, politicians, environment and human rights groups, do actions and put out local press releases. Set up a Amazon support group in your area. Get on the mailing list of major groups working in the Amazon like:

Amanaka's Amazon Network, 339 Lafayette street 8 New York



NY 10012 ph 212-6744646 fax 212-6749139;

Rainforest Action Network 450 Sansome Suite 700 San Francisco C.A. 94111 USA;

or in Australia at the recently formed branch of the RIC, The Amazon Rainforest Info Centre, PO Box 368 Lismore 2480 ph 66-218505 fax 66-222339, attention Dean Jefferys.

Amanaka's is currently raising money to help finance Davi Yanomami to travel to remote villages to warn them of the impending dangers of invading miners. Personal letters of support to Davi and the Yanomami people can be sent via Amanaka's.

Please write letters to

DR ITAMAR FRANCO President of Brazil Palacio do Planalto CEP 70150-900, Brazilia DF Brazil fax 55-61-2267566

and

Dr RAMON VELAAZQUES President of Venezuela Palacio de Miraflores Caracas, Venezuela fax 582-8611101

Call for

1. A thorough and fair investigation of the massacres on both sides of the border. 2. The capture and punishment of the criminals and thier leaders.

3. The permanent removal of all gold miners and other invaders from Yanomami Territory.

The survival of the Amazon's 200 indigenous peoples is the key to the conservation of the Amazon rainforest.

Mitsubishi Poised to Exploit Amazon

RAN Report on Mitsubishi in Brazil

A new report by the US-based Rainforest Action Network warns that the Mitsubishi Corporation, one of the largest destroyers of the world's rainforests, is poised to greatly increase its involvement in the Amazon.

Mitsubishi is a 49.95% owner of the largest timber operation in the Brazilian Amazon, Eidai do Brasil Madeiras S.A. Its tentacles reach into the deepest recesses of the Amazon's tributaries. Eidai is a plywood company based in Belem. It was established in September 1972 by Mitsubishi Corporation and its long-time trading partner, Eidai Sangyo Co. Ltd. (49.95%) together with a minimal participation of a Brazilian entrepreneur, Elias G. Kalume (0.01%). It is the largest plywood mill in the Amazon estuary. The company has exported plywood and veneer to the U.S., Caribbean, and European markets.

Not until March 1993 did the first cargo of Eidai products enter the Japanese market in response to the shortage created by the Malaysian Government's log export restriction measures. It is feared that this could indicate a beginning of an era of increasing and constant timber supply from Brazil to the Japanese market, as well as other Asian markets [Korea, Taiwan and China]. This is an especially disturbing finding. It is an early indication that Asian timber supply and production cost factors are stimulating demand for Amazon forest products. Virola is the company's primary timber source. Since virola has been depleted in the easily accessible tributaries, loggers are currently operating in tributaries as far as the borders of Columbia and Peru. Logs are

being transported up to 3,000 km to Belem for processing. Eidai is also diversifying its harvest to include 15 new tree species.

This could be an era of increasing supply from Brazil to the Japanese

The company relies on individuals, rather than registered companies, for its timber supplies. When suppliers contract with Eidai for a given amount of timber, they are provided advance capital financing and basic commodities to undertake the logging. This loan is repaid with log supplies, but generally results in loggers being drawn into chronic debt. They then become obliged to continue supplying timber at any social and environmental costs. Timber is supposed to be obtained in authorized areas approved by IBAMA, Brazil's national environment agency. In practice, however, timber is harvested in any accessible location by the independent loggers. This is illegal, as is Eidai's use of

Mahogany obtained from the indigenous community in the last two years. While virola has traditionally been harvested selectively by non-mechanized floodplain logging, new pressures for supplies are increasing the environmental impact. More trees are being harvested. Genetically superior trees are being taken, leaving inferior genetic individuals for reproduction. Logging is also increasing in the upland forest, which is much more vulnerable to mechanized, large scale, harvesting practices. Eidai has undertaken a similar reforestation project to those in Sarawak and Concepcion in Chile. While the project is a noteworthy attempt, the report notes that it may be more useful for greenwashing than actual reforestation of degraded lands. A 2.4 hectare plot cost \$40,000 (US) to plant, \$2,000 per month to maintain, and is composed exclusively of climax species. The report concludes that a better investment would be in improvement of current forestry practices and management.

Source: Rainforest Action Network, San Francisco. The complete report is available through RAN.



World Bank Plantation Scheme

EUCALYPTUS A NATIVE OF THE AMAZON?

The World Bank is financing the reforestation project, "Fazendeiros Florestais" in the state of Minas Gerais, Brazil. According to the *Gazeta Mercantil*, a Brazilian economic newspaper (Nov. 24), the project supplies incentives to small farmers to plant native trees in their lands as their alternative source of income. Already 542 farmers that occupy the land of 8,580 hectares have been receiving the incentives.

The Minister of Environment and of legal Amazonia, Rubens Ricu'pero emphasized that this is the model project of the country.

Praise for the project, however, was not universal. One observer pointed out that "the native trees" mentioned in the *Gazeta Mercantil* article are eucalyptus trees!

"In Minas Gerais, the Instituto Florestal (Forestal Institute) succeeded in obtaining a loan of US\$70 millions from World Bank for three years' implementation. Small farmers receive saplings of eucalyptus and they will supply woods for the paper and pulp industry or

the steel industry . . . This type of activities of small scale farmers have made more profit than cattle raising and agriculture" pointed the Minister (of the Environment and Legal Amazonia, Rubens Ricu'pero).

The less than enthusiastic observer commented:

"In the 1970's, the planting of eucalyptus trees was done in a big scale while expelling violently indigenous peoples and small farmers in Brazil. But in these years, Brazilian plantation companies have developed more sophisticated way, not expelling farmers [but] making use of their land and their workforce for planting.

"This measure doesn't harm the land rights of farmers directly. But by planting eucalyptus trees, food production surely decreases and their lands become more and more infertile. Because of rapid increase of eucalyptus plantations in the world or over-planting of eucalyptus, the eucalyptus wood's price may fall in near future. In my point of view, it will not give benefits to small farmers in the long term.

Plantation Industry to Expand?

"This type of planting is increasing in Espirito Santo, Minas Gerais and Bahia. It should be very important to analyse its impacts to the local society." The *Gazeta Mercantil* article reported that the Ministries of Finance, External-relations, the Environment and the Industry and Commerce have decided to create a working group called "External Commerce Board" to counter environmental restriction of export of paper, pulp and wood. This group will launch a campaign to show that Brazil is one of the most competitive countries making pulp and that the production of pulp doesn't cause any harm to the environment. The Minister of the Environment, Rubens Ricu'pero, is deregulating forestry activities. The plantation companies will not need to get approval of a planting plan.

With these new policies, the Brazilian plantation industry may have further expansion.

Source: *Gazeta Mercantil*, Nov.26 P-16

Constitutional Amendments Threaten Indian Rights

Only five years after its promulgation, the present Brazilian Constitution is being reviewed. Almost 18 thousand amendments have been proposed. According to preliminary analyses, about 100 amendments address Indian issues and most of them reduce their existing rights.

Most of the amendments deal with mining activities, and would remove the need for prior approval by National Congress of mineral prospecting and exploitation in Indian lands. Foreign mining companies would be allowed to carry out such activities. Back in 1988, when the Constitution was being drafted, mining was the most controversial issue in the Chapter dealing with Indian rights, as it involves the interests of large companies which intend to operate in In-

dian lands at any cost.

Other amendments would shift the power to authorize demarcations from the Executive Branch to the National Congress and prohibit the demarcation of Indian lands located on the border or which have been invaded.

Given the nature of the proposed amendments, the new constitutional text may strengthen the interests of political and economic groups, to the detriment of the interests of the Brazilian society. Regarding the Indians, the proposed amendments confirm CIMI's forecast that Indian rights would be targets of these groups during the constitutional review.

Source: CIMI - Indianist Missionary Council, Bras'ilia, Dec 1993

Forest Destruction and Human Rights Abuses in Kalimantan

by Anja Light*

Kalimantan, an Indonesian state covering the southern part of the island of Borneo has seen large scale commercial logging operations since the early 70's. This may be one of the only significant differences to the situation in neighboring Sarawak and Sabah - that it all started a few years earlier. The mass exploitation of the country, it's indigenous people and its resources continues.

While large areas of forest have already been logged, and much was destroyed in the fires (linked to earlier forest destruction) which ravaged Kalimantan in 1983, I found that indigenous people are still trying to protect what's left from further exploitation. It's not an easy task. With very little information being distributed, vast distances to be covered by grassroots networks, indigenous people typically being blamed for forest destruction and control by the Indonesian government and their military, the people face quite a challenge.

Indonesian NGOs have supported the Dayak people in their attempts to protect their customary land rights and to resist the encroachment of logging, mining, monoculture plantations and transmigration schemes. Slowly, awareness is building.

A description of some of the current urgent issues being faced in Kalimantan follows::

Logging in the Bentian Region

The Bentian people live in the middle Mahakam river in the Kutai district of east Kalimantan and have been planting and harvesting rattan for 200 years, one of Indonesia's most important non timber products. To cultivate rattan (which had been thought impossible until recent years), farmers need the mature trees to support the large rattan vines and this way help to protect the primary forests. Logging concessions issued by the national government now surround the Bentian people and if allowed to continue will destroy most of their rattan gardens and traditional forest. Their comprehensive proposals to the national government have been largely ignored.

* Anja Light is Director of the newly-formed Gold Coast Branch of the Rainforest Information Centre in Southeast Queensland. She recently returned from Sabah where she visited dayak tribes and local NGO's.



Plantations, Transmigration and Logging in West Kalimantan.

Large areas are covered by logging operations where in some cases only 4% of the labour comes from the surrounding region. After logging plantation schemes often take over. Studies have indicated that 90% of plantation projects are failures - not delivering the promises made to the people, yet these projects are still being supported by the government and international organisations like the Asian Development Bank.

Tactics to steal the land away from the indigenous people include terror and cheating. False promises are very common and companies take chosen village heads on all expenses-paid tours to showcase 78;78 plantation schemes (heavily subsidized by the government). When this didn't work in one community, the next step by the company and local officials was to bring the leaders to a gala event, (where they given copious amounts of alcohol) and in the middle of ceremonial speeches were publicly asked to sign their land over to the company. In the document they not only agreed to hand over their land to the provincial government, but also to take responsibility for any complaints from their community.

In a palm oil plantation scheme, typically around 2 hectares of the plantation is given to each person. It takes them 10-20 years to pay off the government loan but by this time the soil will be so seriously depleted it will be unsuitable for further cultivation. Only 2% of Kalimantan's soil is suitable for permanent agriculture.

Documented proof has shown the involvement of the police and local authorities in protecting companies carrying out these kinds of schemes. A local NGO was able to obtain a "wage slip" from a company documenting monthly payments to soldiers, police, heads of local government and local villages in the region.

The Barito Pacific Timber Group Case - Transmigration and Deforestation.

The Bahau dayak people of the Matalibaq village have joined 80 transmigrant families in their protests against the activities of the Barito Pacific Timber Group in their timber estate. The company originally took aside the headman of the village to sign a letter of agreement of the project with no clear information about what the project would entail. After a village meeting on 23rd May 1992, the people told the company they disagreed with the project taking place on their traditional land. The company went ahead regardless, offering the village very meagre compensation. Now after one year's operation, the transmigrants who were brought over to work in the project have also complained - of improper salaries, inadequate and unsanitary housing and no transportation to their work places. The police, military, forestry officials and the head of the sub-district of Long Iram have cooperated with each other in the intimidation of the villagers. Despite this, demonstrations have occurred on more than two occasions.

The Saban Land Claim - Threats to the Karayan

In the north-east of Kalimantan bordering Sarawak and Sabah, is the proposed Karayan National Park. Within this region live various tribes, including the Saban people (a sparsely numbered tribe who also live in Sarawak). They are hoping to secure their traditional rights to land which is probably within the park boundaries, but need more information and support. There are fears about the effects of a proposed road that would circumnavigate Kalimantan - opening pristine areas of previously inaccessible primary forest. There are also rumours that a Sarawakian logging company is being invited to construct a road joining Kalimantan and Sarawak in exchange for being allowed to log 100 metres on either side of the road. It is believed that both projects would affect the traditional land of the Saban people.

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND WAYS YOU CAN HELP, PLEASE CONTACT ANJA LIGHT AT THE RAINFOREST INFORMATION CENTRE.

Sarawak

Military Invades Penan Village - 20 People Flee.

On the 2nd of November, over a month after the brutal breakdown of the Long Mobui blockade, 3 truckloads of the army "visited" the village. They held a "meeting" with the villagers (most of whom had participated in the blockade) and have since then held several "meetings" ostensibly to find out information about the whereabouts of the blockade leaders and subdue any thoughts of further blockades.

The military were said to have threatened to bomb their village if they did not disclose the whereabouts of 2 reputed organisers. After another of these "meetings", on the 12th of November, 20 people fled the village to hide in the jungle.

The search for the reputed leaders of the blockade has involved the reported payment of \$20,000 to the headman of Long Mobui (who has not supported the blockades) for their deaths. They are now in hiding.

The people are in fear for their lives. International support is needed immediately to remind the authorities that we are aware of what is happening, protest their activities and support the peoples continued struggle.

Through the national newspaper, the *New Straits Times*, the Malaysian government has denied any military involvement in the breaking down the blockades. Instead a front page special last week claimed (erroneously) that money raised internationally to help the Penan has lined the pockets of international NGOs and not assisted the Penan.

Interviews carried out 2 months ago with Penan representatives who had been at the blockade earlier indicate that the people will not give up protecting their land despite the almost unbearable intimidation by the authorities and logging companies. They say:

"Right now the blockades are still going on. We know the people there are very powerful. From every village people have gone to help. Even though the people...are very poor and in a pitiful state, they are still strong".



Hauorani: the Cutting Edge

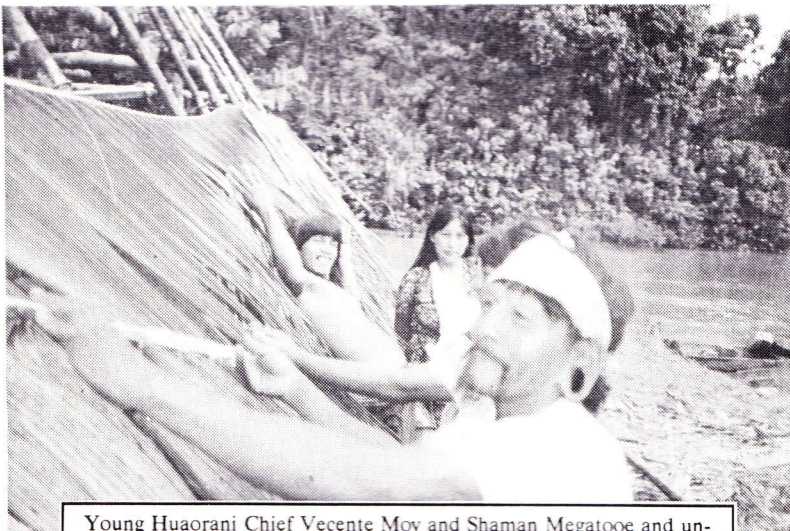
Last year, RIC cameraman Dean Jeffries accompanied a crew of 30 Huaorani Indians cutting a 120-kilometre path through the Ecuadorian rainforest to demarcate their territory. The endeavour will give them legal title to their land, but will not be enough to protect them from oil companies.

The fur of the burning howler monkey gradually singed off and its white skin below began to char. Its limbs stiffened into a grotesque position as I was reminded how closely related I was to this tree-top mammal that was soon to be inside 30 hungry Hauorani bellies. Meanwhile, another Hauorani cook carefully packed hot rice and lentils into a newly-made palmleaf basket ready for the daily lunchtime walk through the jungle to the front line.

The front line was now about three kilometers away. The Hauorani were now in their fifth day of cutting a 4 metre wide demarcation border around their now legal territory. On the third of April 1990, the Hauorani received legal title to 612,560 hectares - about a third of their original territory at the headwaters of the Amazon River in Ecuador.

One afternoon while the setting sun was turning the surrounding rainforest slightly yellow, an older, well-built Hauorani sat on a log next to me to tell me what he thought about being here cutting the line. Oma had walked 5 days from one of the 13 Hauorani villages to get here. "Before", he said, "we used to just spear anyone coming into our territory. Now, with this line cut, we just capture them and take them to a jail".

The Hauorani are the last group of Indians to be contacted in Ecuador and live deep in the rainforest. The first peaceful contact with the Hauorani was in 1961 by a group of missionaries from the Summer Linguistics Institute (SLI). A group of the Hauorani called the Tagaeri refuse contact to this day, and remain isolated deep in the jungle.



Young Huaorani Chief Vicente Moy and Shaman Megatooe and unnamed assistant building a temporary hut at their community centre.

**"I tried to
imagine what it
would be like
when bulldozers,
chainsaws and
men with guns
and poison
entered their
world. I couldn't"**

As recently as 1987, they speared to death two missionaries who were airdropped to their village by helicopter.

The Hauorani have had varying degrees of Christian influence, the most concentrated being over the last 15 years when the SLI moved them from their traditional territory in front of the oil companies to a "protectorate" under SLI control. Now, about 600 of the 1000 Huaorani in the protectorate are returning

to their homelands and establishing villages to live without restrictions from the SLI.

Following their convenient removal, the oil company punched a road called the *Via Auca* 200 km. into Hauorani territory. Unfortunately, there was no mechanism or inclination in those days to stop the spread of colonisers and so immediately the road was made, thousands of colonisers flocked to the area. In the next 15 years, 35,000 ha. of Hauorani territory was cleared for coffee, bananas and cattle ranching along the *Via Auca*.

Now, in a desperate attempt to hold onto their land and culture, and with logistical and financial support from the Rainforest Information Centre in Ecuador (CIBT), the Hauorani have almost finished cutting 120 km. border around part of their traditional land.

The 30-person crew cut an average of 1.5 km. per day over mountains and through swamps and some of the most spectacular rainforest I have ever seen. For 3 to 4 days of cutting, the group works from a tem-

porary base camp made out of palm leaves and a bit of plastic. The camp is then abandoned and a new camp set up further along the track, close to where the demarcation line will pass.

"Life was good before the outsiders came. We were all part of nature"

One night after a meal of monkey and rice, Pirawa, a Hauorani who among other things can make a mean monkey head soup, came into our small palmleaf hut to get treatment for an infected cut. He agreed to answer some questions.

Pirawa has a strong body and thick legs. The large holes in his earlobes showed that he once must have worn traditional balsa ear plugs. At first I guessed he was about 40, but I discovered he fought in the 1942 war against the Peruvian army. Unfortunately for the army, they had encroached into Hauorani territory when they invaded the Ecuadorian Amazon in search of oil.

The younger Hauorani learn Spanish in the school in Pirawa's village, but Pirawa never bothered. This meant my questions first had to go through my Spanish-speaking American friend and then to an Hauorani who could translate Spanish into Hauorani. Pirawa's responses would then come back by the same route, and although this was a long labourious process, I felt privileged to have the opportunity to converse with this amazing man of the rainforest.

"The forest is my home", he said. "I don't want people from the outside coming into my home and destroying it. Life was good here before the outsiders came. We were all a part of nature - there was no separation. Now things are changing and I am worried about our future".

Even with all their land demarcated, the Hauorani are not protected from further exploitation by the oil companies as they do not have below-sur-

face rights. Presently, the Dallas-based Maxus oil company is constructing a road which goes through the north-east section of Hauorani territory and the UNESCO-declared Yasuni biological park.

Further to the north, the Secoya and Coffani Indian communities have had to deal with 20 years of oil extraction, with its associated toxic chemical emissions and oil spills. The impact on aquatic life and people is obvious. The fact that more oil has spilt into the headwaters of the Amazon than Exxon spilt in Canada reminded me that oil and rainforests don't mix. Unfortunately, this was not as clear to all of the Hauorani.

"The forest is for the uka, the bananas, the animals and the Hauorani, not the company"

Despite protests by the Hauorani to the President in Quito in 1992, and a loud international outcry, the Maxus road continues - testimony to the new President's stand on increasing the oil flow from the Amazon.

During my eight days with the demarcation crew, communicating as best I could with the Hauorani, I got to know some of the old fellows on the camp. Youhue, an old guy I liked a lot, used to tell us stories around the fire about the old times before they had contact with anyone from the outside, when they speared the missionaries who kept trying to invade their land. Youhue also told us how important it was to protect the sacred mountain of Galaras, and how if it was damaged, all the Shamans would lose their power.

"The Hauorani don't like the oil road", Youhue declared. "They poison the rivers, killing the fish and the animals. The forest is for the uka and the bananas, the animals and the Hauorani, not the company. The Tagaeri don't want to come out of the forest and be influenced by people from the outside, so

people should just leave them alone".

After the missionaries were speared in 1987, Petro-Bras, who "owns" the concession to explore in Tagaeri territory, sponsored two expeditions to find the Tagaeri - the first by 17 heavily-armed military personnel and the second by a bunch of mercenaries. Neither, I'm told, was successful. Since then at least one Tagaeri has been shot by an oil exploration team, and 2 oil workers have been speared by the Tagaeri.

"The Tagaeri don't want contact. People should leave them alone"

The blood-red scar turns to trees laid flat as we come to the end of the Maxus oil road, which has now reached into Hauorani territory, 30 km from the Napo River.

Gazing out of the open door of the noisy ten-seater aircraft, my video camera running virtually non-stop, the dense forest canopy below opened slightly to reveal a small winding tributary of the mighty Amazon. I visualised a small group of isolated Indians living by its banks in huts now built under the forest canopy to avoid detection.

My eyes and viewfinder moved ahead of the invading Maxus Road, to where the jaguar and giant anacondas live free. The jungle canopy disappeared into a hazy horizon, to where the Tagaeri and other uncontacted groups are believed to be living.

I tried to imagine life deep in the jungle, completely isolated from the outside world.

I tried to imagine what it would be like for the jaguar and these isolated Indians when bulldozers, chainsaws, helicopters and men with guns and poison entered their world.

I couldn't.

Please write to Ecuador's President: Arq. Sixto Duran Ballen, Asesoría de la Presidencia de la República, García Morena 1043, Quito, Ecuador. Fax: 011-5932-580-751. Express your concerns.

Temperate Rainforests Under Threat

by Richard McDermott, Western Canada Wilderness Committee

Temperate rainforests are extremely rare, originally covering about 0.2% of the Earth's land area. Greatly exceeding all other terrestrial ecosystems in their density of biomass, some temperate rainforests contain over 1,000 tonnes of living matter per hectare. They are the most diverse terrestrial ecosystems outside tropical forests, but much of this diversity may be lost within 39 years at current logging rates.

Three-quarters of the world's temperate rainforests (5 million ha.) are on the Pacific coasts of Canada, the US and Chile. Ninety-five percent of the US temperate rainforest has been destroyed, while in BC (Canada) and southern Chile, 40% of the original forest remains.

The remaining areas are coveted by transnationals for clearcutting. Chilean old growth forests (including all types of forests) are being destroyed at the rate of 122,000 ha. per year.

"Lack of local control over land and resources is at the heart of the problem"

The Mapuche natives' symbolic land recuperations in 1992 were met with the detention of 100 people by the police. Said one Mapuche: "if we lose the land, we lose our language and slowly we will also disappear." With little participation of local people in decisions regarding the management of their natural resources, sustainable community-based alternatives, inclusive of indigenous people, are displaced by transnational corporations.

Does this rush to ecological monotony and social dislocation have a corresponding economic benefit? No. The paradox is the squandering of the economic potential of Chilean forests as one of the world's richest ecosystems is reduced to wood-chips by foreign capital and state subsidies. Foreign multinationals, which don't have a stake in maintaining its sustainability for the local people, twice rob them of

"The alternative: a local industry making valuable products, not woodchips"

the economic potential of their land: first, as only a fraction of the forest's economic potential is utilized, and second, as much of this wealth escapes the community and even the country.

The sustainable alternative is a locally-controlled forest industry which transforms the wealth of the forest into valuable forest products, not wood-chips, and guarantees the forest's ecological integrity. This would ensure that the benefits stay in the community and will continue to do so for future generations.

"Proposed forestry legislation threatens to exacerbate rather than alleviate the problems"

The legislation, while necessary for the rational management of native forests, has some sections which threaten to exacerbate rather than alleviate the ailing health of Chilean forests. This law, *Recovery of Native Forest and Promotion of Forest Management*, would privatise many of the functions of Chile's National Forestry Corporation, rather than strengthen its regulatory effectiveness. It would stack a forestry consultative committee with industry

representatives and foresters to the exclusion of indigenous peoples, environmentalists, forestry workers, and scientists. And it would officially authorize the continued substitution of native forests with plantations of the fast-growing Monterey pine and Eucalyptus, which has long been carried out informally with tacit state approval. Such official sanction for the chipping of pristine forests to make way for plantations makes little sense given the three million hectares of deforested land that is already available for plantation forestry.

What You can Do

Send letters to Chile (and copies to WILD, 20 Water Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6B 1A4, fax: 604-683-8229, ph: 604-669-9453) urging:

- *Modification of the forest law to eliminate the substitution of native forests with exotic-species plantations;

- *Promotion of a locally controlled, ecologically sustainable industry which rejects clearcutting and promotes value-added industry;

- *An intensive silviculture program on deforested land to reduce pressure on old-growth forests;

- *A moratorium on all logging of native forests so an adequate inventory can be done;

- *Preservation of more native forest in National Parks.

Emphasize that temperate forests are a global heritage.

Please send or fax letters to:

Excelentísimo Senor Presidente, Republica de Chile, Casa de la Moneda, Santiago, Chile. Fax 011-562-697-3262. Senor Presidente del Senado, Senado de la Republica, Valparaiso, Chile. Fax 011-563-223-2654.



GUYANA: Asian loggers move in

Asian loggers are finding lucrative deals in Guyana's forests. Nearly all the State forests have already been leased out and the Forestry Commission is unable to regulate the industry. This has led to international calls to freeze the logging before it gets out of control.

In the most controversial of these deals, the Barama Company Limited (BCL), clinched a 50-year licence to exploit some 1.69 million hectares of forests for the export of raw logs and processed plywood. Their concession overlaps the lands of some 1,200 Amerindians, most of whom lack clear titles. They are demanding that their land rights be secured before any further logging takes place.

BCL, a consortium of the notorious Sarawak-based Samling Timbers and South Korean trading giant Sung Kyong, expects to export some 300,000 m³ of timber per year, rising to 1.2 million cubic m³/year after ten years - compared to a total annual export for the entire country in 1989 of some 94,000 m³.

BCL secured extraordinarily favourable terms for its operations, meaning that Guyana will see little if any net benefit. BCL will supposedly log according to the principle of sustained yield, but a recent survey of the concession by the Edinburgh Centre for Tropical Forests (ECTF) cast serious doubts on whether the low canopy forests of the area can regenerate timber at the rate it will be cut.

The ECTF study, commissioned by BCL, also noted that the logging could have serious negative impacts on the local communities, including: the reduction or elimination of traditional food, shelter and other forest resources of local communities; increased hunting, wildlife trade, illegal timber felling, settlement, shifting cultiva-

SURINAM: Trees Pray; MUSA Invests

An article in the Dutch newspaper *de Volkskrant* (11-11-93) alerted conservation organisations to recent investments of an Indonesian group in Surinam. The group, Mitra Usaha Sejatisbadi (MUSA), is reportedly planning investments amounting to US\$1.5 billion over the coming years, of which US\$ 1 billion will be in forestry. These developments are probably the outcome of recent visits of the Minister of Social Affairs of Suriname, Mr. W. Soemit to Indonesia. MUSA has presented the Suriname government a plan covering forestry, wood processing and palm plantations. So far they have been granted a 20-year timber concession for 150,000 ha of forests. MUSA says it favors a sensitive forest management system called CELOS, a system that is very much in a small scale experimental research phase. In Indonesia, authorities reportedly revoked concessions to the group due to failures to comply with logging regulations.

Organisations in Suriname have expressed concern at how readily the group was granted the concession, since domestic agents normally have to wait for years. Indians in the concession area and a national conservation organisation (*Stichting voor Schoon Suriname*) are concerned at the activities of MUSA and their secret negotiations with the Government. The conservation organisation fears

the weak institutional forestry capacities in Suriname will not be able to adequately monitor the forest management of the scale proposed. The situation is all the more worrying since the economic situation is worsening in Suriname and corruption is rife. There are many unanswered questions over the negotiations, the motives of MUSA and the identity of its key members.

What You Can Do

Send letters or faxes to the President of Suriname:

Mr. R. Venetiaan, President of Suriname, Presidentiele Paleis, Onafhankelijkheidsplein, Paramaribo, Suriname. Fax: 09 597-475266

- expressing some of the above concerns.

Freek Udo Netherlands Committee for IUCN Plantage Middenlaan 2B 1018 DD Amsterdam The Netherlands tel. 31 20 6261732 fax. 31 20 6279349



tion and mining; social conflicts over jobs, markets, prices and split communities; pollution from chemical spills; culture shock for remote communities; introduced diseases. Amerindians near the logging camp have already complained to the Minister of Amerindian Affairs about several of these problems.

The Amerindian Peoples Association (APA) has repeatedly called on the Minister for Amerindian Affairs to review the contract and threatened to call for an international boycott of Guyanese timber products. In September, the Minister promised to institute a Commission of Enquiry to review the Amerindians' claims and the Barama contract.

The APA has a strong case. Historical records show that Amerindians have inhabited the area since at least the 1500's and official recommendations to secure some of their lands have been made repeatedly in the past. Moreover the BCL contract charges the Government with responsibility for maintaining good relations between the company and the Amerindians and makes a specific provision for areas to be set aside to ensure sound management.

What You Can Do

Use the following sample letter to write to the Minister for Amerindian Affairs in Guyana.

Hon. Vibert DeSouza MP Minister for Amerindian Affairs c/o Office of the President New Garden Street Georgetown Guyana Fax: +592 2 69069 +592 2 63395

Dear Minister,

We have been very encouraged to learn of your decision to establish a Commission of Enquiry to review the contract of the Barama Company Limited, with a particular emphasis on the rights of Amerindians.

However, we are concerned that, since the initial announcement, there appears to have been little progress to set up this Commission.

We urge that this Commission of Enquiry be instituted without delay and:

- established so that it can function in an independent and accountable manner mutually acceptable to your ministry and the Amerindian organisations;

- given broad terms of reference that allow it both to review the full social implications of the concession and make clear recommendations to the Government on the means to overcome any potential problems it identifies;

- made up of members suitably qualified to examine the full range of economic, social, environmental and legal concerns that have been raised about this concession.

Yours etc.

Source: World Rainforest Movement, Dec.'93

Further information: electronic mail-conference rainfor.general or contact the World Rainforest Movement Forest Peoples Programme fax: + 44 60 876 743



ARGENTINA: Indians appeal for support against unjust law

The Mocovi people of northern Argentina are calling for international support to prevent the passing of a law which will deny them collective rights.

The Mocovi, part of the Guaykuru Indian nation, number some 60,000 and inhabit the dry subtropical forest zone of the north of Argentina in the provinces of Chaco, Santa Fe and Santiago del Estero. They have a long history of armed resistance to, and persecution by, the Spanish crown and later the Argentinian government.

Since the 1980s the Mocovi have begun to organise and mobilise and have been reoc-



cupying their lands. In 1989, legislation was passed which gave greater recognition of their land rights. The law has fallen into abeyance, however.

Now, a new law is being pushed through the provincial parliament of Santa Fe, which does not adequately recognise Indian collective rights. The Mocovi demanded that consideration of the law be delayed until late 1994 to allow time for a proper period of consultation with the communities likely to be affected and for the law to be amended accordingly. Despite these appeals, the law has now been passed by the parliament without such consultation, but it has not yet been ratified by the Governor of the Province - the final step for it to have the force of law.

The Mocovi are planning major demonstrations and public actions to oblige the Governor to accommodate their demands and they ask for international support for this action.

What You Can Do

Please send a letter or fax to the Governor of Santa Fe and the President of Argentina urging them to:

- veto or delay the approval of the 'Ley de Comunidades Indigenas' approved by the Parliament of Santa Fe on 18 November 1993.

- undertake a process of consultation with all the Indian communities of the province in order to develop legislation appropriate to their needs and rights.

- apply provincial law 10375, approved by the Parliament of Santa Fe in 1989.

- prevent the expulsion of Indian communities from their claimed territories, such as the case of Pig'nik in Guadalupe Norte.

Addresses:

Don Carlos Reuteman Governor
Province of Santa Fe Casa de Gobierno
3000 Santa Fe Argentina Fax: 54 42
551067

Dr. Carlos Menem Presidente de la
Nacion Casa de Gobierno Balcarce 50
1000 Buenos Aires Argentina Fax: 54 1
331 6376

For further information please contact
the Centro Mocovi on Fax: +54 465
99148. Please send copies of your let-
ters/faxes to

Centro Mocovi Casilla de Correo 36
3720 Melincue Santa Fe Argentina
Source: World Rainforest Movement,
Penang, 3 December 1993.



COSTA RICA: Stone's Woodchip Plans Thwarted

*Ministry of Natural Resources
Partially Rejects Environmental
Impact Study*

December 22: A Costa Rican government agency decided not to approve an environmental study which would have okayed the construction of Ston Forestal's wood chip mill on the Osa Peninsula. Ston Forestal Costa Rica is a subsidiary of the Stone Container Corporation of Chicago. On December 13, the Environmental Impact Study Commission of the Costa Rican Ministry of Natural Resources, Energy and Mines (MIRENEM) stated that it had partially rejected Stone's study on the impact of a wood chip mill and port facility. The chip mill is to be fed by Stone's gmelina tree plantations in order to supply paper and cardboard for markets in the U.S. and Asia.

The commission has asked Stone for more information and documentation on 28 points pertaining to the construction and

operation of the mill.

Costa Rican environmentalists said the commission's rejection is a positive step in stopping Stone from building the chip mill and port in the pristine Osa forest and Golfo Dulce marine environment.

The rejected EIS clearly states that the Los Mogos sector (chip mill and dock site) of the Osa is critically important as a biological corridor between Esquinas and Corcovado National Parks. The construction of the chip mill, dock, increased road traffic of 185 trucks per day, 24 hour operation and would affect the flora and fauna of this area and the marine environment of the Golfo Dulce. It would also increase erosion and influence local weather patterns. Instead of stating that the mill should not be built, this section recommends that sewage pipes 6' in diameter be built under the road to allow animals such as jaguars and tapirs to travel between the two protected areas. This plan is totally inadequate and it is very improbable that any animals use the sewage pipes.

During the period when the EIS was being considered by the Ministry of Natural Resources, Greenpeace issued an appeal for letters to be written to Costa Rican authorities expressing opposition to Stone's plans.

Source: Pamela Wellner, Greenpeace
San Francisco, Dec 21, 1993



SWITZERLAND: Help Needed to Push Labelling Law

December 15, 1993

**Dear forest friends around
the world,**

On September 21st, one of the two houses of the Swiss Parliament passed a motion calling on the government to implement a labelling scheme so that all timber and wood products produced and traded in Switzerland would be labelled by country of origin and species. The motion has now passed to the second house of parliament for its consideration.

The wood industry in Switzerland is running a strong campaign against the motion. Swiss environment groups and indigenous peoples support groups all support the motion, but we need your help if the motion is to be passed by the second house of parliament. We especially need the support of communities and NGOs in countries affected by destructive logging, such as Canada, Russia, Brazil and those in Southeast Asia.

We see compulsory labelling as an important way to give information to consumers, and as a step towards further environmental regulation of wood production and trade.

Below is a draft letter setting out the arguments. Please write to the Swiss authorities supporting the labelling scheme soon, at the latest, before end of January 1994. Please send me a copy of your letter. For the forests, Christoph Wiedmer

Forest Campaign Greenpeace Switzerland
Postfach 276, 8026 Zurich, Switzerland,
Fax: 00 41 1 241 38 21 or email c/o
panderson@gn.apc.org

SAMPLE LETTER

To the National Councillors of the Swiss Parliament c/o Dr. Ludvik Vrtacic, Parlamentsdienste, Fachdienst 3, 3003 Bern, Switzerland, Fax: 00 41 31 322 98 72

**re: Duty to declare the origin
and type of timber and timber
products**

Dear Councillors,

We are pleased to hear that the Council of States, in its last session on September 21st 1993,

voted in favour of the motion to declare the origin and type of timber and timber products as well as the voluntary eco-labelling scheme (Motion: Simmen).

The duty to declare country of origin and species, and the eco-labelling scheme together offer the public of your country important information that can help them make an informed choice about the wood products they use. We strongly welcome this initiative. (It supports our efforts/ attempts/struggle in our country to fight for our forests, to defend the human rights of indigenous peoples, and our fight to stop forest destruction caused by the logging industry.)

We urge you to vote in favour of these regulations.

Yours etc.

In your letter, you can include some of the following points:

- if uncontrolled logging is a problem in your country, how pressure from consumer countries can be a great help in generating effective regulation of the logging industry.

- Ask the members of parliament to support a binding declaration since this is the first effective step towards protecting the forests and reducing the imports of timber from non-sustainable used forests.

- Switzerland has one of the best and most progressive forest laws in the world (clearcutting is prohibited by Federal Law) but imports of wood from destructive sources are not regulated in any way.

- It is the right of everybody to know what he or she buys and where it is from.



CANADA: When Will the BC Govt. Listen?

In what has become the largest civil disobedience action in Canada's history, over 800 people have been arrested since July in logging protests at Clayoquot Sound on Vancouver Island in British Columbia. Over 9,000 people have lived at the "Peace Camp" established by the Friends of Clayoquot Sound (FOCS) and supported by Greenpeace, clearly demonstrating to the Harcourt New Democratic Party Government that Canadians will no longer allow their forests to be devastated by a few multinational corporations.

In spite of outrageous sentences of up to 45 days in jail and fines of between \$1500-\$2000 being imposed for "criminal contempt of court", the blockades have continued well into the Northern Fall. Business people, grandmothers, christian groups, students, fishers and many others have made their presence felt at the blockades, resulting in spectacular international media coverage of this campaign and causing major embarrassment for the BC government.

"Over 9,000 people have lived at the Clayoquot 'Peace Camp'"

"We are stepping up our campaign," vowed FOCS spokesperson Tzeporah Berman. "Our focus will widen to promote boycotts of BC timber and pulp around the world. We will also go to the legislature in Victoria, to the MacBlo offices in Vancouver - and hundreds of rainforest defenders will be here blockading in Clayoquot Sound until the Harcourt government stops listening to the corporations and starts listening to the people."

While not participating in the blockades, the Western Canada Wilderness Committee and the Sierra Club of Western Canada have been actively pressuring the government. The Wilderness Committee is calling for new visions for the timber industry in

BC, and the Sierra Club is mounting a legal challenge to the government's overturning of a reduction in the annual allowable cut.

Unfortunately no end is yet in sight for the tragic resource conflicts in British Columbia, which must be won in the next few years if major areas of the ancient coastal temperate rainforests are to win the protection they deserve.

What You Can Do

Please write to Premier Michael Harcourt:

Parliament Buildings, Victoria, BC V8V1X4, Canada. Fax: (604) 387-0087.

Urge him to protect Clayoquot and let him know the world is watching.



Apology

In reference to an article appearing in the Stop Press of this magazine in October 1993 concerning events at Sowarra village in Morobe Province, Papua New Guinea, the Rainforest Information Centre Inc. of Lismore, New South Wales, Australia believes that Yema Gaiapa Developers Pty Ltd is a landowner company, and not a logging company. Any inferences that can be attributed to the Rainforest Information Centre that Yema Gaiapa may be involved in illegal activities or in causing environmental damage are hereby withdrawn.

John Seed, Director, Rainforest Information Centre

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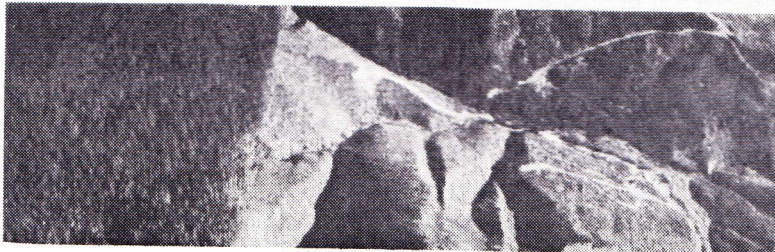
"Clearcut: The Tragedy of Industrial Forestry"

Edited by Bill Devall, Photo Edited by Edgar Boyles with Jacket Notes by David Brower

The Rainforest Action Network has joined with Save

CLEARCUT

THE TRAGEDY OF INDUSTRIAL FORESTRY



America's Forests, The Foundation for Deep Ecology, Sierra Club Books, Earth Island Press, and Canada's Future Forest Alliance to confront industrial forestry with its own ugly face. To be released this [northern] winter by Sierra Club Books and Earth Island Press, **Clearcut: the Tragedy of Industrial Forestry** is the most comprehensive pictorial ever published on the destructive practice of clearcutting. The book was designed by activists as a campaign tool to graphically demonstrate to policy makers the destruction of North American forests wrought by industrial forestry.

"Our goal is to personally deliver over 5,000 copies of *Clearcut* to key decision makers throughout North America during the first quarter of 1994. A comprehensive media packet providing information about the campaign, the authors, photographers, and key contacts, will be provided for activists along with the book. Staff members are also available to assist you with strategic planning for your individual campaign. **Please call us for more information on how you can get involved.**"

"Clearcut demonstrates one of the most heinous ways parents have devised to steal from their children" -

David Brower

"The essays on ecoforestry in Clearcut convincingly show that we have an alternative to industrial forestry

Ecoforestry is a practical alternative to the failed industrial model..."

- Alan Drengson, Professor of Philosophy, University of Victoria.

**FOR INFORMATION PLEASE CALL CLEARCUT
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Letters

Yes. We Shoulda Known Better!

Dear Editor,

The article about Vanuatu (WRR26 p. 30) is completely misleading. The government is not greatly concerned about sustainable logging; they are concerned about insufficient bribes.

If you would investigate the situation more closely, you will find a virtual Woody Allen comedy of the third world: foreign companies tripping over each other to reach the appropriate minister's pockets; ministers fighting with each other to issue logging rights; well-meaning foreigners jailed for insufficient bribery and established and concerned companies are being forced closed to make way for richer organizations. The local groups are fighting the invasion. They are happy to have sustainable logging rights sold, but apparently the government is no longer considering environmental/local concerns. One company even brought in germ-infested bulldozers, threatening the local ecology with disease, not just logging.

The government started with good intentions several years ago, but individuals have become greedy. A closer investigation of the country, with all its fascinating history, culture and unique social structure would be warranted.

In the meantime, always double-check government radio reports. You should know better than that . . . and don't just trust me. Double-check and see the condition there for yourselves.

- A concerned industry observer.

(The author of this letter is right. It was careless of WRR to print the report. Unfortunately, we are not in a position to check either the account given in this letter or the one we printed in WRR26. However, past experience suggests that "industry observer's" account is likely to be nearer the truth. - Editor.)

The Struggle for Land and the Fate of the Forests

Edited by Marcus Colchester and Larry Lohmann World Rainforest Movement, The Ecologist and Zed Books, 1993.

"Among the most important books ever written about the destruction of tropical rainforests"

This book is among the most important ever written about the destruction of tropical rainforests. It should be read by every one wishing to gain an understanding of the forces driving tropical deforestation, and how international bodies, far from acting to relieve the pressure on tropical forests, have actively pursued policies which promote poverty and tropical deforestation.

It is well known that the largest and most formidable threat to tropical rainforests is colonisation by the rural poor. As Larry Lohmann makes plain in the second chapter, governments, aid agencies and large companies (especially those with vested interests in the timber industry) continue to blame the victim by attributing this to "poverty", "overpopulation", "underdevelopment" and the like.

In a powerful challenge to power elites and the corrupt international economic system they uphold, this book cogently argues that it is the deprivation of peasants' power and rights over land by expanding market and state systems which is responsible for their tragic predicament.

As the case studies (on Guatemala, Brazil, Zaire, Thailand, Indonesia and the Philippines) demonstrate, there exists a stunning complexity and diversity of situations faced by the rural poor. However Colchester highlights two common themes; that peasants' welfare is being steadily undermined by their rapid integration into the market and their domination by urban and export demands, and that peasants lack land, or clear rights to land. By providing land security and increasing the political power of the rural poor, agrarian reform could resolve these problems. Without it there is little chance of seeing any reduction in deforestation rates while any significant areas of tropical forests remain standing.

Although widely acknowledged for decades as a prerequisite for poverty relief, social justice, democracy and national and economic security,

* Colchester and Lohmann, "The Struggle for Land and the Fate of the Forests" p.308

agrarian reform has dropped off the agenda of UN agencies and the Multilateral Development Banks.

The main aim of the book is to add the urgent need to preserve tropical rainforests to this list of imperatives for pursuing agrarian reform, and to help refocus attention on the need to make this an urgent priority.

In pointing to the consistent failure of top-down attempts at agrarian reform, the authors clearly demonstrate their case that success will only be achieved if the reform involves a transfer of political power from the wealthy to the poor. In this they are supported even by the World Bank which is quoted as noting that "sound environmental policies are likely to be powerfully redistributive".

It is for this very reason that governments and development agencies have failed to implement effective land reform policies.

Throughout the Third World, exploitative colonialist patterns of development have disrupted indigenous systems of land ownership and management transforming previously self sufficient economies into zones of agricultural production for export.

In concert with writers like Susan George, the authors point out that following independence,

colonial elites were merely replaced with home-grown ones, and that institutionalised injustice, land wealth and concentration, patronage and "cronism", and censorship and repression are firmly entrenched. These "enemies of sustainability" are unlikely to be challenged by the North, dependent as the developed economies of the world are on access to cheap commodities from the Third World. And as Colchester notes, "agrarian reform challenges the power of elites who bene fit from the present economic structures and who control the political process". As the detention and deaths of thousands attest, such elites are deeply threatened by movements pressing for change.

This point is profoundly distressing, for in illustrating so clearly the vested interests of the forces stacked up in favour of the status quo, any hope of change appears very remote.

Do not be intimidated by this though, as the concluding section contains some very useful suggestions for activists in both the North and South.

While acknowledging the importance of immediate action to "halt the depredations of logging, mining, hydropower development, road building, forestry master planning and top-down land-use zoning", the focus of this collection of papers is on the imperative of genuine grassroots movements of the rural poor gaining secure access to land and an

" New models for agrarian reform which give the initiative to local peoples are the solution, the achievement of which requires a devolution of power not only from the first world to the third, but also within the third world itself"

Japan, Western Europe, or North America". This is as close as the book comes to dealing with the role of industrialised countries in tropical deforestation. Their demand for beef, timber, bananas, tobacco, coffee, palm oil, rubber, paper, rayon, sugar, stock feed and other goods produced in the tropics is not mentioned as a contributing factor. Nor is their manipulation of international markets in ways which undermine third world agriculture. The indebtedness of third world nations to rich countries is not treated in any depth. Nor is the role of large-scale aid projects funded through the World Bank and other agencies³.

The chapter on resettlement schemes asserts that such schemes are inevitable in the Asia-Pacific, given the region's growing population. More enlightened government regulation of these schemes is seen as the way to minimise the harm they do. This approach legitimises the export of problems originating in other areas into tropical forests. The skewed land distribution which creates the "need" for resettlement is not viewed as something open to change, and the right of tribal people to own the forests which are appropriated for resettlement schemes is not considered in this chapter.

This contrasts markedly with the conclusion in Marcus Colchester's chapter on indigenous people: "a truly sustainable development [in tropical moist forests]. . . can only develop with the active participation of the forest peoples themselves".

In Australia, this book costs nearly \$200; in the UK, 65 pounds. This puts it beyond the price range of most individuals and NGO's. Most Third World groups would certainly be unable to afford it. Only wealthier buyers are likely to gain access to it. Because wealth and conservatism usually go together, most readers will merely find apparent confirmation of their values and beliefs. What a pity. If the Atlas's analysis of why rainforests are destroyed was as rigorous as its analysis of satellite information and FAO statistics, it could have stirred things up a bit.

- John Revington

Note: This book is one of a series of three. A volume on the tropical forests of Africa has already been published and another one on the forests of South America is due to be released soon.

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- For an analysis of the impact of international aid agencies on tropical deforestation see eg. "Multinational Banks and Tropical Deforestation", Rich, B., 1990, in: Lessons of the Rainforest, Head, S. and Heinzman, Robert, eds., Sierra Club Books, San Francisco.
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Privatisation as a Conservation Policy

Vogel Replies to Revington

I must confess I was rather nonplussed by John Revington's review (*WRR no.26 p.33*) of my book *Privatisation as a Conservation Policy* (to be republished as *Genes for Sale*, New York, Oxford University Press). With every sentence, he seems to level a different criticism and yet, despite the barrage, little of the book was reviewed besides those parts that the reviewer found most "annoying". Space does not permit me to address each criticism raised. I will reply to just those comments that I believe to be the most misrepresentative; my purpose is not to defend my work but to correct his most egregious misrepresentations.

Revington passionately criticises the absence of advocacy for indigenous landrights in *Privatisation*. I am neither an ethicist nor a jurist and it would weaken my economic analysis to assert "who rightfully owns the land" as Revington believes I should. I am an economist who simply argues that whoever owns the land should also own the intellectual property rights over the organisms on the land. However, in the very introduction, I state plainly that "Where it is determined that indigenous people own the land, the proposal will imply a windfall gain to these peoples given their low population densities." (p.3). Throughout the book, I give examples where indigenous peoples will benefit under such a policy. The first example lies in the dedication of the book to "Truganini - the 'last' Tasmanian"; others include the recognition of traditional knowledge of medicinal plants as trade secrets.

Revington is indeed correct when he states that I "assume 'man' acts primarily out of selfishness". This assumption is so well documented that it hardly warrants any comment here. Likewise, few would contest that selfishness has driven deforestation in the tropics. Selfishness for timber. Selfishness for gold. Selfishness for hydroelectricity. Selfishness for land titles. Fortunately, selfishness can now drive preservation in the tropics. *Privatisation* shows how selfishness for the "genetically coded functions" used in biotechnology can outstrip the aggregate value of alternative land uses in timber, etc. Therefore I find it rather ironic that Revington accuses me of engaging in the economist's habit of "developing theories without an understanding of, or even reference to, the societies upon which they want to impose their ideas." The society for which I wish to impose my ideas is ours - the capitalistic and selfish North!

Perhaps the most unfortunate aspect of the review is the reviewer's deference to formalities over substance. Again, he is "annoyed" that I would use the term "man" to refer to "the whole human race". If I were to rejoin with similar political correctness, I would take umbrage with his term "race"

when what he means is "species". Such pettiness only detracts from the general debate over privatisation. This is not to say that I concede any merit to his criticism. On the contrary, words were carefully chosen in my text. For example, Chapter Three of the book is entitled "Genetically Coded Functions: the importance of definitions". In that chapter I show "genetically coded functions" can be unique to different taxonomic levels, from the individual to the race to the species to the genus to the family. However, Revington disdains the term as reductionist without acknowledging my argument against the alternative term "biodiversity". That argument can be made succinctly: if we "save biodiversity" where biodiversity = species, then we might obliterate useful races; if we "save biodiversity" where biodiversity = races, then we might obliterate useful individuals; and if we "save biodiversity" where biodiversity = individuals, then we are saving everything - what will we eat? Albeit clumsy, the term "genetically coded functions" captures exactly what we want to save - functions under genetic control that can be unique at any taxonomic level. By the twin criteria of logic, breadth and discrimination, "genetically coded functions" is preferable to "biodiversity". Nevertheless, logic will not persuade those readers who have invested positive emotion in words like "biodiversity" and negative emotion in words like "privatisation"; they may even agree with Revington that "this is a book to annoy the hell out of a lot of people." Unfortunately, such annoyance obstructs a viable solution to the mass extinction crisis.

Revington Replies to "Vogel Replies to Revington"

Vogel misunderstands or ignores my basic criticism. I read *Privatisation* (or *Genes for Sale*) in order to judge whether it offers an effective solution to the mass-extinction crisis. I was unable to make such a judgement because the book fails to make its case adequately. I repeat: a more realistic analysis, based on an understanding of the social and political forces at work in tropical forest destruction, is necessary before a realistic appraisal of the "privatisation" idea can be made.

Before returning to this basic criticism I would like to respond to some of the points Vogel attempts to make in response to my review.

Firstly, his use of "man" when he means "human" is sexist. Objecting to sexism is not petty.

Secondly, I did not "passionately criticise" Vogel's failure to be an advocate for indigenous land rights. What I said was that the issue of land ownership cannot simply be dismissed as beyond the scope of the book. As Vogel himself admits, this issue is "fundamentally important". The success or failure of the privatisation strategy is dependent on who owns the land, and whether their ownership is accepted by other sections of society.

Thirdly, I did not criticise Vogel's term, "genetically coded functions" (GCF's). My criticism was of his belief that the value of any organism, species or genus is to be judged purely according to its usefulness to humans. A growing number of environmentalists believe such anthropocentrism is a root cause of the Earth's ecological crisis. One problem such an approach could cause is that under Vogel's scheme, GCF's which are of no direct use to humans could be neglected and so the integrity of the ecosystem as a whole could be compromised.

In general, indigenous cultures have an intimate understanding of their environment and act not out of selfish anthropocentrism as Vogel would have us believe, but with a deep concern for the welfare of their land. (see, for instance, *The Wisdom of the Elders*, Suzuki and Knudtson, Allen & Unwin 1991).

"The society for which I wish to impose my ideas" says Vogel, "is the capitalist, selfish North!" Yet, since the majority of the GCF's under threat are in the countries of the South, it is in these countries that the privatisation strategies would have to be implemented. Vogel's failure to deal with specific situations in these countries is therefore a fatal flaw in his argument.

Experts often attempt to confine the debate to their field of expertise (see *Stripping the Experts* Brian Martin, Freedom Press, London, 1991). This is what Vogel attempts to do. His field is economics, not tropical deforestation, and he argues his case in economic terms without showing much understanding of the social forces at work. He fails to analyse even one real-life situation in a tropical country, and that is not good enough.

Here are some of the questions which *Privatisation* fails to answer: How will the massive costs of policing a scheme like Vogel's be met? Are we expected to accept on faith that the royalties from selling genes will cover the astronomical costs of the vast database he proposes, plus the payment and monitoring of "genestealers" and still have enough left over to outbid the oil and timber industries? How will the massive corruption in the tropical timber industry be confronted?

What about landless peasants? Globally, they are the greatest agents of rainforest destruction. They are forced to clear land in order to survive and they are motivated not by a desire to maximise profits, but by the need to fill their stomachs. Does *Privatisation* offer a solution to their problem? Does Vogel seriously believe they can all become "genestealers"?

The onus is on Vogel to answer such questions and he fails to do so. Perhaps he would dismiss them as being beyond the scope of his book - as he does with the question of land ownership. If so, then I suggest that the real world is also beyond the scope of his book.

Until there appears a more rigorous analysis, the case for large-scale "privatisation" is far from convincing. I suspect that if "privatisation" does have a role in arresting deforestation, it will be more limited than Vogel's rather grandiose vision.

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4. **Chile:** (p. 25) Ten points for a letter to the President
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